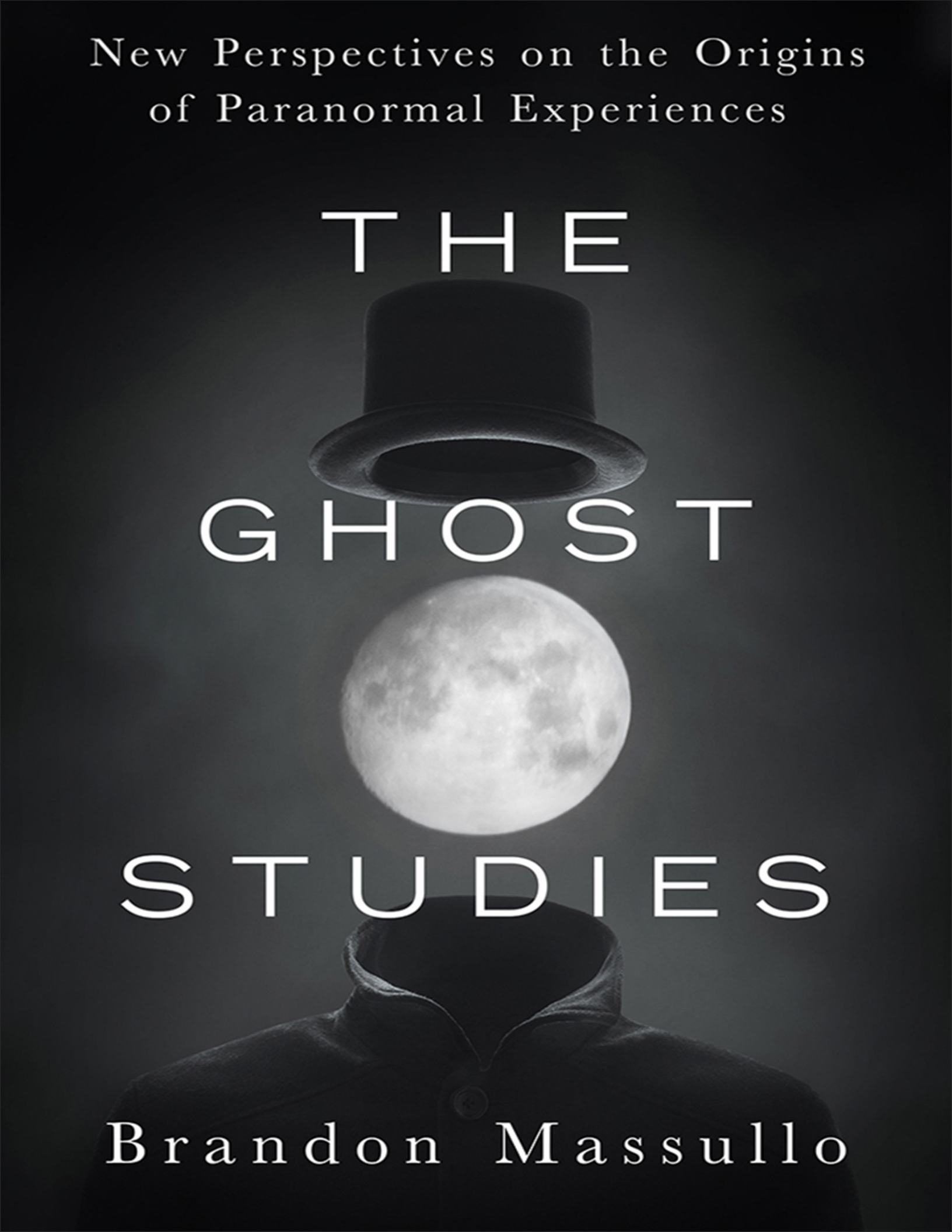
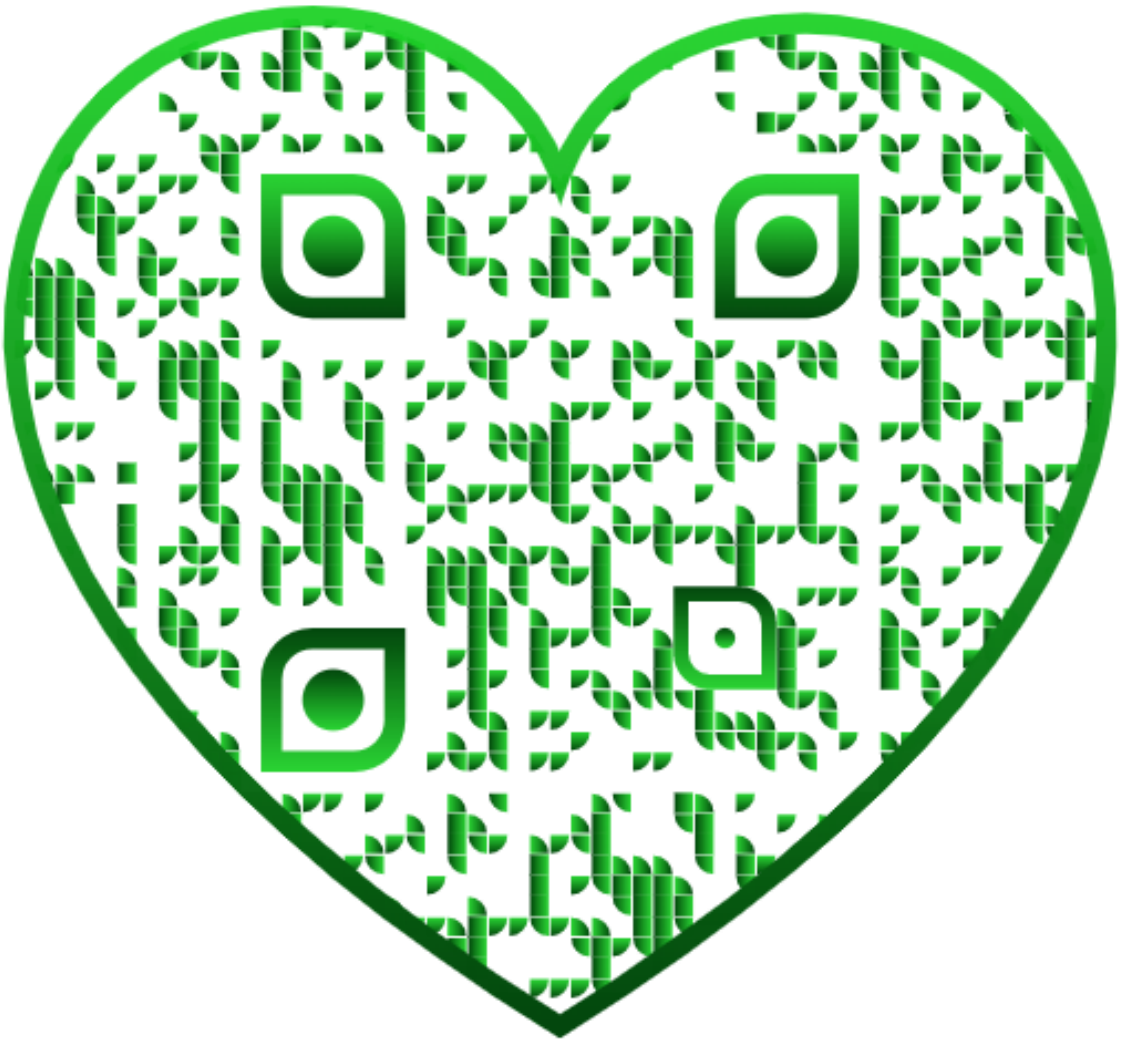
New Perspectives on the Origins of Paranormal Experiences

THE GHOST STUDIES



Brandon Massullo



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Brandon Massullo

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INTRODUCTION

Do you remember the first time you heard about someone's ghostly encounter? Not just someone on TV, but a friend or family member.

I was 14, and after my friend thrilled me with his personal encounter with a ghost, he asked me, his voice trembling slightly, "Do you believe in ghosts? Are ghosts real? What causes a ghost?"

I must have stared at him for 10 minutes as my brain worked overtime to come up with an intelligent response. But the only answer I could muster up was "I don't know."

It turns out that my response, at age 14, is very similar to what the majority of mainstream scientists and researchers would say today.

My friend's questions have bothered me for more than 20 years, and I have actively sought the answers through education and interviews with those who report interacting with a ghost. While looking for the answers, I noticed similarities among ghostly encounters, which ultimately led to developing new theories to explain ghosts and ghostly experiences presented in this book.

I haven't investigated hundreds of haunted locations, nor do I own a vest with hundreds of pockets. I never understood why ghost hunters on TV always have those vests. I do not dress in all black. I don't claim to have psychic talents. And I'm not part of a paranormal investigation team. What I am is extremely fascinated with reports of ghostly encounters. My passion has led to countless hours combing through the paranormal literature and speaking with people who report ghostly encounters. When someone is recalling their ghostly experience, their whole persona changes. You can physically see the rush of emotion and excitement on their faces. The people around them change as well. From staunch skeptics to steadfast

believers, their ears will perk up and their eyes will widen when someone is recalling a ghostly encounter. Everyone is fascinated with ghosts.

Let me tell you a little about myself. I'm a clinical therapist and parapsychologist residing in Northeast Ohio. I've worked within the Neurological Institute for the world-renowned Cleveland Clinic, conducting behavioral health consultations. Currently, I'm the director of behavioral health for a local hospital. I've been fascinated by paranormal phenomena for 20 years, and have been a participant and featured speaker in numerous paranormal forums and events including the Parapsychological Association's 60th Anniversary Celebration. I studied psychology and parapsychology at the University of Edinburgh in Scotland, and my research has been cited in parapsychological journals, newspaper articles, and mainstream books.

I believe that I provide a unique viewpoint of research into ghosts due to my education and experience in both clinical and research psychology. My undergraduate degree is in psychology and my graduate degree is in clinical counseling from the University of Toledo. I have 14 years of clinical experience working in the mental health field and have conducted more than 5,000 psychological evaluations. I also have an MSc (equivalent to a master's degree in America) in psychological research methods, with a specialization in parapsychology from the University of Edinburgh in Scotland, UK. My research at the University of Edinburgh centered on neurobiological correlates of ghostly encounters and I studied within the Koestler Parapsychology Unit at the University of Edinburgh under the supervision of author and international lecturer, Dr. Caroline Watt (*Parapsychology: A Handbook for the 21st Century*). Between my clinical and directorial positions, as well as my research, I've interviewed and collected hundreds of real-life ghostly encounters. It was by noticing similarities amongst these hundreds of reported ghostly encounters that I developed the new theories I will present in this book.

I present my background to communicate that I have experience with assessing hallucinations brought on by mental illness or drug abuse, and in my opinion, the ghostly encounters that a majority of the millions of people have reported are definitely not the results of mental illness or substance abuse. Upon hearing of someone's ghostly experience, skeptics are quick to proclaim "They are crazy," or "You must have been imagining things," statements that question the witness's mental stability. This is an

uneducated and irresponsible way to respond to someone who reports a ghostly experience, but unfortunately it is far too common.

With ghosts and hauntings, although an individual's experience is unique to them, overall there are some key similarities among all ghostly interactions. Through the years, I started to really listen to people's paranormal experiences and certain similarities caught my attention and led me to write this book.

A true apparitional or ghostly experience happens on rare occasions and is only possible when several factors line up. These factors include psychological, environmental, and bioenergetic fluctuations. Much time and research has been spent on whether people's ghostly experiences are of a natural or spiritual origin, which has simply led to scattered results. Looking for a single cause for a haunting or ghostly experience may be too simplistic. For such complicated phenomena, it is likely to be a combination of several theories or mechanisms.

In this book, we will explore popular theories on ghosts, discuss the role of energy and electricity during ghostly encounters, and finally, through real-life case examples, explore my theories on the processes that are necessary for apparitions, ghostly experiences, and hauntings.

If you are looking for more than ghost stories, and want to know what causes ghostly encounters, this book is for you. By the end of it, we will have provided answers to questions such as:

- What causes ghostly experiences?
- What is the catalyst to witnessing a ghost?
- Why do certain people report numerous ghostly encounters and others none?
- What leads to certain locations being haunted?

1
A NEW PERSPECTIVE ON GHOSTS

"My father had passed away quietly in the hospital around 3 p.m. that day. We had a very special relationship and I definitely considered myself a 'daddy's girl.' His passing was a shock to the whole family. Overwhelmed with sadness, worry, and fear, I laid down on the couch as soon as I got home that evening. It must have been around 8 p.m. when my encounter occurred. While lying on the couch, an overwhelming sense of comfort overcame me. As I sat up, I saw an image of my father. I wasn't scared, just shocked. He walked toward me and whispered, 'Don't be sad.' He then rubbed my shoulders, which is what he would do to ease my sadness when I was a teenager. The encounter made me smile even though it only lasted seconds and then he slowly faded away."

Fascinating, intriguing, and downright awesome, this experience is an example of a common first-hand account of a ghostly encounter. To connect directly with a person who had been such an integral part of one's life is the definition of a life-changing event that transcends what science and humanity can explain with mere words.

Millions of baffling ghostly encounters are reported each year all over the world among individuals from all walks of life. With so many ghostly experiences, there are few answers—perhaps because we are not asking the right questions.

The paranormal is a difficult area to study in a logical, scientific way, as paranormal experiences are usually erratic, episodic, poorly documented and reported, random, and not repeatable on demand. These characteristics are everything that the scientific method deems irrelevant. On the other hand, it is naive to believe whole-heartedly and without exception in the

scientific method. In my view, the assumption that all of life's mysteries can be answered through methods or protocols is a falsehood.

Throw all your stereotypes and conceptions about ghosts out the window! Pretend that you have never read a book about ghost stories, watched a ghost-themed movie or a ghost-hunting TV series, and start with an open mind. Only by looking at these apparitions, hauntings, and ghostly phenomena in a new light, based on new science, can we fully understand them. The telephone has certainly changed since the 1800s; maybe it's time we also redefine what a ghost really is.

Paranormal Journey

Fasten your seatbelt, check the gauges, and make sure you have enough fuel (coffee, tea, or something stronger) because you are going to be my copilot on a journey of exploration into ghostly encounters. Through numerous cases of reported ghostly experiences, you are going to be presented with concepts that will change your beliefs about ghosts forever.

Ghosts and ghostly experiences have remained a topic of great interest and debate for well over 100 years. Throughout the course of this book, a concise and encompassing theory will be presented to explain ghostly experiences such as apparitions of recently deceased family members, hauntings, and communications from the dead, which have baffled man (and woman) for hundreds of years.

Despite excellent work and investigations into ghosts, researchers examining the origins of these ghostly experiences have not fully explored the importance of certain similarities among all ghostly encounters. These similarities have led to simple, fresh, and exciting theories on ghosts.

Before we dive into my thoughts and theories on ghostly encounters, I think it's a good idea to review previous research and theories into ghostly experiences.

Popular Ghost Theories

If you are reading this book, it means that you have some interest in ghosts or the paranormal, which most likely means you're awesome and open-minded. Congratulations on this accomplishment! It is also highly likely

that this is not the first book you've read on the paranormal; therefore, some of the theories on ghosts discussed in this section might be a review or refresher. However, I encourage you to continue reading as some of the theories discussed form a basis for later chapters.

Before we proceed, I want to clarify some terms. Throughout the book, I will use the terms "ghostly encounters," "haunt-type phenomena," or "ghostly experiences." These terms are essentially interchangeable and refer to experiences or commonly reported phenomena associated with ghosts, spirits, and haunted locations such as *visual apparitions, sense of a presence, auditory phenomena, dizziness/headache, objects moving, overwhelming feelings/emotions, unexplainable weakness of body parts, muscle pain, overwhelming fatigue, skin irritation, tactile phenomena, unusual lights/energy, change in temperature, tingling/burning sensation, nausea, unexplained pressure, or other*.[1,2,3] A ghostly encounter does not mean unequivocally that the witness saw an apparition. A ghostly encounter could be a sensed presence, a person feeling as if they were touched, or a sudden an unexpected change in temperature.

I'm going to start with some theories about ghosts from steadfast believers. Paranormal investigators are passionate, and this is evident in the number of websites, Internet radio shows, and conventions dedicated to the paranormal. To be honest, these theories are a lot more entertaining than mainstream science's views on ghostly experiences, which will be discussed in Chapter 10.

Everyone has heard a ghost story, and many people have actually toured a house or location that is allegedly haunted. I grew up outside of Youngstown, Ohio, and as a teenager there were several stories about a location called "Zombieland." The stories about Zombieland had been around before my generation, and I'm sure teenagers in the area are still visiting that location. As teens, we would all pile up in a car and drive out to Zombieland on Friday or Saturday night.

Most of the time, we would never get out of the car; however, every once in a while, one of our peers, in an effort to impress, would venture into the most haunted areas. Zombieland is not one location or house, but rather a half mile or so of land in a secluded, wooded area. In the area is a bridge, called "Troll Bridge," where a teen committed suicide. It is reported that if someone writes an individual's name on the bridge, the "bridge people" will rise up and kill that person.

Another story revolves around the "blood house," which is where a witch used to live. It is said that she steals and murders children and buries them in the front yard. The final story involves the "green man" who haunts the roads. Supposedly, he was electrocuted while working and died, which is why he glows green.

I never gave much thought to these stories when I was in high school; however, looking back at the mixture of history, folklore, and paranormal phenomena surrounding this location, I now find it to be fascinating. As you are reading, chances are you might be thinking about a local house or building that everyone in your town said was haunted. We've all heard about haunted houses; however, very rarely do we ever sit down and think to ourselves, *What are ghosts? What causes ghosts? Why is this house haunted and the one next door not? People die every day, so shouldn't we be overwhelmed by ghosts?*

A good place to start in an effort to answer these questions would be theories and thoughts which define ghosts. If you asked 100 people to define "ghost," the general consensus would most likely be that ghosts are simply the spirits or souls of those who have died. This is a pretty common belief among those who believe in ghosts. Inherent in this thought is the idea that humans have a soul and that our thoughts, personality, interests, memories, and dislikes are not biologically based and can live on after our physical body dies. This goes against modern science, especially neuropsychology, which is pretty confident that our personal identity and behaviors are the result of nerve cells, molecules, and other brain processes. This neuropsychological view is disliked by many people as it paints humans as robots and our emotions and identity as being the result of our circuitry. Most disturbing for many is the fatality of neuropsychology's view on death, which is simply that the machine stops working, similar to a TV, *and with death that individual's personal identity ceases to exist in any dimension*. That's pretty depressing, huh?

Individuals who are religious or spiritual view the soul as the invisible, incorporeal essence of a person, which survives death. Common Catholic beliefs are that at death, one's soul leaves the physical body and enters into heaven or hell. Many other religions also have beliefs regarding the soul, such as reincarnation, which is essentially the transfer of the soul from one individual being to another.

Spiritualist and Pop-Culture View

James Van Praagh is a medium and psychic who claims to have the ability to speak with the deceased. He believes that after the soul leaves the physical body, it moves into a realm between Earth and the next closest dimension. He believes that this realm is where spirits make a decision whether to remain earthbound or cross into the light.[4] Van Praagh believes that ghosts and hauntings are the result of earthbound spirits. My first thought was, *Why would anyone choose to stay on Earth rather than cross into the light?*

Earthbound spirits, according to Van Praagh, stay close to Earth due to unfinished business, being scared of the light, a desire to stay to watch over family and friends, or simply because they are confused or unaware of what is going on and what direction they should take.[5] Many mediums and psychics see themselves as "ghost psychologists" in that they work with the ghost to determine their issue and help them cross into the light. Van Praagh's views are probably the most common theory held by believers in ghosts or life after death, which is commonly called the Spiritualist view. This view is based on the Spiritualism movement of the mid-1800s. Van Praagh did not originate this theory, as it has been the common hypothesis of ghost hunters, psychics, and paranormal enthusiasts for more than 100 years.

The idea of hanging around to complete unfinished business or to keep an eye on things is almost part of our culture. Many popular TV shows, movies, and documentaries often use this premise. The idea is that there is a reason for the haunting and once that reason is discovered, the ghost, or disembodied soul, can move on. The TV show *Ghost Whisperer*, which Van Praagh produced, has a similar theme in almost every episode, which involves the medium gaining information from the ghost, then working with the ghost to help them find peace and cross over.

Popular Paranormal Investigator Views

A common belief among paranormal enthusiasts is that there are two types of hauntings: *active/intelligent hauntings* and *residual hauntings*. The examples discussed previously regarding a ghost with a soul and a purpose

would be considered an *active* or *intelligent haunting*. In these types of hauntings, the ghosts have a conscious and are aware of their surroundings and actions. These ghosts are not confined to an area, have the ability to interact with witnesses and objects, and are not time- or routine-specific in their movements.

"My wife had passed away unexpectedly over the summer. While it's been difficult, I've managed to care for the house myself. As Halloween approached, I was putting up decorations as the kids in the neighborhood love trick or treating. My wife and I had bought a plastic pumpkin together when we first got married 20 years ago. We had placed this pumpkin in our window every Halloween. I searched the house for days looking for that pumpkin till I finally gave up. A few days after giving up, I was walking down the staircase and was shocked to see my wife standing at the bottom. She smiled and whispered, 'Check behind the workbench' and then vanished. I began to weep uncontrollably and rushed out to the garage. A huge smile came across my face as the plastic pumpkin was lying behind the workbench. It must have fallen off the top shelf."

In this example, the apparition is directly interacting with the witness. Other examples of intelligent or active hauntings are when the ghost is interacting with the environment, such as moving furniture, closing doors, turning on faucets, or perhaps telling the witness to "get out" or "leave this house."

Residual hauntings occur at specific times, locations, and dates. For instance, a certain ghost appears every Christmas night and walks around the kitchen. In these hauntings, the ghost is not conscious and is more like a recording that is being replayed. These are not conscious souls, but rather a type of environmental imprint or video. The following is an example of a residual haunting.

In 1948, there was young man named Allen who worked at a sawmill just outside of a small town in Ohio. Allen was a hard worker, and he loved his routine. Allen would leave the mill everyday precisely at 7 p.m., when his shift ended. Allen would then walk four miles toward town and across the town's wooden covered bridge. On July 10th, Allen was running a little behind and he ended up getting to the bridge as it was getting dark out. As he was walking across the wooden bridge, a plank broke and Allen became trapped. Allen struggled and screamed for help, however, not a soul was around. A few moments passed and it was now completely dark outside.

Allen continued to struggle to free himself as a car began to speed in his direction. Unable to move, Allen yelled as loud as he could; however, the driver never saw him. The next day the mill was concerned that Allen had not arrived to work. Police re-traced Allen's walk home and found his body in the shallow river below the bridge. The wooden bridge was torn down not long after Allen's death and replaced with a more conventional metal/steel bridge; however, every July 10th, police get several calls from concerned drivers stating that they saw a man in 1940s clothing lying on the floor of the bridge as they drove by him.

As you can see from the example, the ghost is not interacting, communicating, or moving objects in the environment. The phenomena is also only occurring on the bridge in which he was killed (location-specific) and the events are reported to only occur on July 10th at night (time-specific).

The theory on which residual hauntings is based was developed in the 1920s and is called *place theory*. Other terms, which are essentially the same idea, are *stone tape theory* and *imprint theory*. Place theory states that the environment can hold the memory of past events, which can be viewed, heard, tasted, smelled, or felt at a later time by a person with sufficient sensitivity to the information offered by the memory. In essence, experiencing a haunting would be similar to watching a DVD in that you see and hear events in front of you that were recorded in the past. No matter how many times you watch the DVD, the people and actions are always the same. Although there is no specific explanation or mechanism which explains how the environment could hold such events or recordings, the general belief is that there is an extreme amount of energy released during tragic events or deaths that is somehow burned into the environment. In the case of Allen, the tragic events of his death, in theory, were burned into the local environment, and if the conditions and times are right, others can view this recording of his death. This theory will be discussed in more detail in later chapters.

Wormholes, Portals, Quantum Physics, and Multiverse Theory

Quantum mechanics is the study of the smallest atoms and particles that make up our universe and is a subset of physics. Individuals in this field

deal with complicated mathematical equations in an attempt to break down the universe and matter to its smallest pieces. In recent years, there has been some suggestion that quantum theories could help explain paranormal phenomena such as ghosts. It is difficult to pinpoint a person or research that provides a concise theory on how ghosts and quantum physics interact. That is a polite way of saying that the Internet and popular ghost-hunting books are filled with contradicting beliefs, views, and hypotheses on how this interaction occurs. The multiverse is the hypothetical set of finite and infinite possible universes, including the universe in which we live.

As Larry Flaxman and Marie D. Jones write:

> Fundamentally, the various theories all point to the possibility of multiple realities and/or dimensions. In fact, scientists have postulated that space may actually be comprised of 11 dimensions. Although we can only perceive three spatial dimensions, is it possible that everything we brand as "paranormal" may in fact be "normal" in one or more of those other eight dimensions? If a ghostly apparition is indeed coming to us from another dimension or parallel universe, it might not be a dead person we are seeing at all, but a real live person whom we are merely glimpsing across the great divide of reality.[6]

Another belief is that there are wormholes or portals, which are located at different locations throughout the world. These portals or doorways, under special conditions, allow ghosts to enter into our universe. A popular ghost hypothesis is that the location of portals, vortices, or wormholes are overlaps between parallel universes and, under certain conditions or environmental circumstances, paranormal phenomena occur.

Anne had just finished eating dinner and was in the kitchen cleaning things up. As I was placing items in the dishwasher, I happened to look in the dining room. I was shocked to see a huge black void about four feet high and four feet wide hovering above the ground. I immediately thought something was terribly wrong with my eyes. I looked away, rubbed my eyes, and then looked back and the void was still there. As I walked closer, I could see a mother and her child inside the void. The mother and child were sitting together in the grass, talking and smiling, while enjoying the bright sunny day. They were dressed in what I would describe as 1800s clothing that I've seen in Western movies. It was as if I was watching a floating TV.

The mother then made eye contact with me and appeared confused and scared. Terrified, she grabbed her child and ran away. They weren't ghosts and I got the sense they were as alive as me, however from a different time. It felt as if I peeked into the past.

In this example, the witness, in a sense, was able to access a previous time, dimension, or universe.

Psi-Based Theories on Ghosts

Psi is an encompassing term in parapsychology to describe paranormal phenomena. Psi involves various actions which cannot be explained by science, such as clairvoyance, psychokinesis, remote viewing, telepathy, near-death experiences, out-of-body experiences, and extrasensory perception. In general, the psi hypothesis contends that ghosts are not so much discarnate beings, but rather, the workings of ESP, telepathy, thought transference, or communication at a distance among the living.

Phantasms of the Living was published by the Society for Psychical Research (SPR) in 1886. This book is more than 1,000 pages and discusses more than 600 spontaneous cases of telepathy or thought transference linked to apparitions. Spontaneous phenomena cases involve experiences which occur only once and without expectation. In other words, the individuals do not know they are going to have a ghostly experience, nor are they seeking a ghostly experience. These individuals also don't have a history of paranormal experiences, they don't claim psychic abilities, and, for the most part, they are not even interested in the paranormal.

Spontaneous cases are important because they decrease the possibility of suggestibility or expectancy in paranormal phenomena. For example, if I purposefully spend the night in a haunted hotel room, I might be expecting or hoping to have a ghostly experience. I will have also had a previous suggestion or thought that my room is haunted, which could influence or to some degree cause a ghostly experience (this will be discussed in Chapter 10).

The general idea is that person A (agent/sender) sends a telepathic message, usually during a distressing event, which is picked up by person B (percipient/receiver). The message can be interpreted as a hallucination (auditory, visual, tactile, etc.) or as an emotional impression or "feeling."

Frank Podmore, who was a researcher for the SPR, wrote a book entitled *Telepathic Hallucinations: The New View of Ghosts* in 1909, where he discussed his theory and the role of telepathy in ghostly experiences.

It's important to realize that the term "hallucination" should not be considered a sign of mental illness in the context of the 19th century. Hallucinations had, to some extent, different meanings in the 1800s and early 1900s. When discussing hallucinations in the following quote, Podmore is referring to vertical hallucinations, which are genuine sensory experiences or mental images that actually coincide with real events; for example, seeing a visual image of your mother which coincides with her death. According to Podmore:

> Life-like apparitions, occasionally seen during the illness or at the time of death of the person whom they represent, are not ghosts but hallucinations. But though hallucinations, we have seen reason to believe that in some cases they may be really connected with the person whom they represent; that they are waking dreams in some fashion inspired by his thought. But if apparitions of the living may be inspired by the thoughts of the living, may not apparitions of the dead be inspired by the thoughts of the dead?[7]

George Tyrrell, a parapsychologist who wrote *Apparitions*, believed that apparitions were unconscious perceptual representations of information gathered through paranormal means.[8] He believed that telepathy plays a huge role in apparitions; however, he proposes the concept of "idea patterns," which are sent from agent to percipient. Idea-patterns are like scripts, in that the percipient (receiver) unconsciously receives an already completed vision of what the agent (sender) looks like, is wearing, smells like, and says. Tyrrell believed that these idea-patterns explain why apparitions appear in clothes, carry objects, or have accessories (for example, riding a horse). Understanding how this idea-pattern or apparitional script is developed is a bit complicated, and you will be best served by reading Tyrrell's book.

We will discuss the theories related to the psi-hypothesis throughout this book, as the work of early psychical researchers such as Frank Podmore, Eleanor Sidgwick, Edmund Gurney, and George Tyrrell form the basis of my theories on ghostly experiences.

Paranormal Adrenaline

Paranormal phenomena are similar to adrenaline in that they are evoked or used only when needed, making them, to some extent, outside of conscious control. You may have heard stories of mothers who exhibit extraordinary, superhuman physical strength in times of crisis in order to rescue their children. A common story is about a mother whose child was trapped under a car, and with adrenaline pumping, she managed to lift the car and save her child. Could this mother lift the car at any time? Probably not, as it was the intense, life-threatening situation that activated the adrenaline that helped her lift the car.

An Oxford-trained astrophysicist, Michael Shallis states that when someone is in need, psychological distress, or in a crisis mode, then paranormal powers are called upon, much like many of our bodily functions (for example, adrenaline).[9] Shallis gives an example of a woman who lost her dog, and after exhausting conventional methods to find it, she used dowsing techniques to locate her beloved pet.

Dowsing is a technique used to locate ground water, oil, buried treasures, and many other objects without the use of a scientific apparatus, such as metal detector, or the use of ground penetrating radar. The dowser typically holds two L-shaped wire rods and walks around until the wires cross, which indicates the location of the object the dowser is seeking (for example, groundwater, precious metals). Another dowsing technique is to hold a pendulum over a map and slowly move it across the map. When the pendulum begins to swing out of character over a certain spot on the map, this again would indicate the location of the desired object or missing person.

While the woman with the lost dog was in a state of psychological distress, she looked at her options and used dowsing techniques over a map, which showed a reaction to one location; the dog was soon found there. She had never attempted dowsing before and was never able to repeat her paranormal powers when later tested. Was she a fraud? Definitely not. Was this just a giant coincidence or luck? Definitely not. Her difficulty in replicating her success with dowsing was most likely because she could not get herself into the same deep emotional state as when she had lost her beloved dog.[10]

Ingredients of a Ghostly Experience

In this book, I introduce the "ingredients" or processes which are present in ghostly experiences. By combining previous research in psychology, bioenergetics, and universal consciousness, this book identifies a simple equation that sheds light on ghostly experiences. Bioenergetics is concerned with the energy found in biological organisms. When I speak of bioenergy or bioenergetics, I'm referring to the fluctuation of our internal energy or human electricity.

Hauntings, apparitions, and ghosts are the combination of psychological processes, human biological processes, and external environmental processes. I believe that for an apparitional experience to occur, all of these factors need to be present. This is the reason that a true apparitional experience very rarely occurs. This complex combination of factors is also a primary reason why no conclusive evidence exists of ghosts or why science has failed to objectively discover a unified cause for these paranormal phenomena. The following is a greatly simplified view of my theories, but try to keep this in mind throughout the book.

Psychological Aspects
+
Changes in Internal Energy or Bioenergetics
+
External Information Acquisition
=
Ghostly Experience

Skeptics and believers have argued over the existence of ghosts and whether these external discarnate "beings" are in fact present in allegedly haunted locations. TV shows and paranormal investigators will send people into haunted locations with the latest "ghost tech" such as EMF meters, digital recorders, and infrared/night vision cameras with the hopes of catching a glimpse of these ghosts. Unfortunately, with all this time and effort, there is not one piece of evidence which points conclusively to the existence of ghosts. However, research and paranormal investigations may not be approaching ghostly encounters correctly. A common belief in the paranormal field is that apparitions or haunt-type experiences are *created* by

an external source (the spirit is trying to communicate with us, the ghost haunts this building), therefore, this "external entity" uses some form of external energy in the environment.

Perhaps it is *us* who, in a series of internal processes, are obtaining or causing the ghostly phenomena. Perhaps we as humans are the key to ghostly experiences. Close your eyes and think back to all the ghost-hunting TV shows you've watched, any personal ghostly experiences you've had, and all the personal encounters stories that you have heard about.

What is the one constant to all those ghostly encounters? It's humans! We are the constant! Human beings need to be present to "experience" an apparition, poltergeist, eerie feeling, temperature change, uneasiness, or any haunt-type or psi experience. Because humans and animals have electrical and magnetic fields, *any involvement of humans also includes involvement of electricity as we are a collection of electrical signals*.[11] Electricity, electrical fields, and magnetic fields have always been present during a paranormal experience since the dawn of time.

So does this mean that we are the ghosts? No. What I believe is that humans and our emotions and internal energy (bioenergetics) are the starting point or catalyst for a genuine ghostly encounter. For example, emotions flip the switch, and our internal human electricity provides the energy for a ghostly encounter. The essence of a ghostly experience remains in the environment.

Radio waves are constantly surrounding us; however, because they are invisible and essentially undetectable (similar to ghosts), we are not aware of their existence until we turn on our radios and hear music. Similar to radio waves, perhaps there is other information available in the Earth's atmosphere that we can access or tune into, which causes ghostly encounters.

My view is that hauntings, apparitions, and ghosts are the combination of psychological processes, human bioenergetic processes, and external environmental processes. I believe that for a ghostly experience to occur, all of these factors need to be present. *This is the reason that a true ghostly experience very rarely occurs*. This complex combination of factors is also a primary reason why no conclusive evidence exists of ghosts or why science has failed to objectively discover a unified cause for these paranormal phenomena.

My approach is to look at the reported ghostly phenomena on an individual basis. Does seeing an image of a deceased family member mean unequivocally that one has witnessed a ghost? Actually, it does not. There are numerous natural explanations to ghost sightings, such as hallucinations, misinterpretations, dream states, and so on. Even among parapsychologists, there can be different explanations, such as ESP, clairvoyance, and clairaudience.

The term "apparition" is often lumped with ghosts or spirits; however, the meaning is different. When the words "ghost" or "spirit" are used, it assumes the phenomena we are experiencing is related to someone surviving death and communicating with us, when there is no real way to know this for sure. The only thing we know is that something strange has occurred. On the other hand, the definition of an apparition is simply experiencing a ghost-like image. The difference may seem small, but the term apparition does not imply survival after death or communication with the spirit world. This distinction is important because we don't want to immediately jump to conclusions that a visual image is in fact a ghost. For the most part, in the remainder of the book, I will use the terms "apparitions," "ghostly experiences," "ghostly encounters," or "haunt-type experiences" when describing "ghosts."

I again stress it is most likely a combination of three processes that occur to set the stage for an apparitional experience. Individually, these processes are important, and there has been research in all areas with respect to paranormal experiences. I will discuss these three processes' importance separately, and then will discuss how they interact or combine to cause a paranormal experience. I will also introduce the connection between "environmental sensitivity" and paranormal experiences, which sheds light on why some individuals are predisposed or biologically-wired to having more paranormal or haunt-type experiences.

Summary

Inherent in the theories discussed in this chapter is a belief that ghostly experiences are, in fact, genuine and not the figment of someone's imagination, fraud, hallucinations brought on by drugs, or some other natural cause to ghostly experiences. We can tell by reading some of the

most popular views on ghosts that the definition of a ghost varies. Ghosts are believed by some to be earthbound spirits of the dead, beings from a parallel universe, residual imprints of tragic events, and the result of psi-based abilities.

The next chapter will move slightly away from my perspective on ghostly phenomena to review one of the most prolific modern theories related to ghosts, which is that they are based in energy or electricity. The association between ghosts, energy, and electricity has led to an explosion of tools often called "ghost tech," which are believed to detect the presence of energy-based ghosts. The most popular modern ghost hunting gadgets—electromagnetic field (EMF) meters and digital sound recorders—are discussed in the next chapter.

2
ENERGY, ELECTRICITY, AND APPARITIONS

Ava was 12 when she moved into a new house just outside of town. The house was small; however, one benefit was a huge attic bedroom. Her two brothers shared a room and Ava had the whole attic bedroom to herself. Ava's parents would often overhear Ava talking while she was alone in her bedroom. They chalked it up to an imaginary friend and creative play. Things were good until Ava started to become frightened of her "imaginary friend," calling him mean and scary. She decided to move out of the room. While moving things out of Ava's room, her mother reported the atmosphere in the room changed. She stated the air was heavy and she felt as if ***there was electricity in the air.*** *It was at that moment that she had seen what she described as an elderly man standing in the corner of the room. She ran downstairs and, currently, no one in the family goes up into the attic. Strangely enough, there are times when the* ***lights would flicker on and off throughout the night*** *in the attic room. Neighbors often call the family asking why they continue to turn their attic light off and on.*

Electricity is frequently associated with ghostly encounters. Lights flickering, as well as turning on and off, are commonly reported phenomena in haunted houses. In the previous example, the witness mentioned feeling as if there was "electricity in the air." This is another environmental change that is often reported during ghostly encounters, as well as during psychic "connections" or "visions."

Suzy moved into a duplex with her friend from college. The duplex was older, and Suzy and her roommate loved it because nobody occupied the bottom half, which meant more room when they threw parties. Suzy never thought of herself as psychic; however, she reported that she would often

hear a voice of a child every time she was in the lower part of the duplex. She could never make out what was said as the voices were soft and almost like whispers. She thought she was having a mental breakdown; however, what was unique was the whispers only occurred in the lower part of the duplex and never occurred while upstairs or outside of the house. During their parties, friends would often report having "strange feelings" while downstairs. Many reported they felt watched as if a presence was following them. One friend felt like a child tugged at his pant leg. Suzy's roommate studied electrical engineering and would often remark that the downstairs felt "electric," as if live electrical wires moved from room to room, following her.

The next case example involves ghostly phenomena at an outpatient medical clinic. The staff, which included nurses and physicians, reported an apparition of a tall man with a hat on. The sightings seemed to occur more frequently in one of the exam rooms. While investigating the room, one of the witnesses reported:

> I went in the far door and walked by the curtain room divider. There I stopped. I stretched out my hands, palms down. "It was right here," I said, patting the air for emphasis. As I did, I was submerged to the elbows in what felt like live electrical current. For a moment, I was stunned. It was like putting my hands in a tub of water with a plugged-in hairdryer. "Oh, my God," I said, "I'm in it!" ...It was hot, wet, and painful. As I stood there, the heat and the current increased as if an unseen someone had their hand on the knob, turning up the voltage.[1]

Because ghostly phenomena, energy, and electricity seem to be connected, it is beneficial to take a deeper look at some theories related to electricity, energy, and ghosts.

Energy

Essentially, energy causes things to happen all around us. During the day, the sun gives out light and heat energy. At night, street lamps use electrical energy to light our way in the dark. Cars are powered by gasoline, which is

a type of stored energy. Even humans are fueled by the energy we are storing from the food we eat.

Through the years, science and society have learned to change energy from one form to another to help us move vehicles, cook foods, and light our homes.

Physics is often linked with theories related to ghosts. A popular notion in regards to the formation of a ghost is actually based on Einstein's theory regarding the conservation of energy, which states that energy cannot be created or destroyed. Basically, when we use energy, it doesn't disappear but is, instead, changed from one form of energy to another. For example, chemical energy is converted to thermal energy when we burn wood in a fireplace or burn gasoline in a car's engine. Another example is stored energy in a flashlight's batteries, which becomes light energy when turned on.

Some paranormal enthusiasts believe that because the body is made up of electrical energies that cause our hearts to beat and synapses to fire, that energy cannot disappear or be destroyed when we die; it is transformed into a new energy—ghosts.

Energy is often used to describe what ghosts use to manifest themselves in our environment. The general idea or suggestion is that ghosts are essentially made of energy and that, in order to manifest themselves, they must use the nearby energy around them such as batteries, appliances, heat, and electricity. Paranormal investigators often report that their video cameras or other equipment malfunction or run out of battery power during investigations of haunted locations, despite having charged the batteries. Cold spots, which are often related to ghosts, are believed to be the result of ghosts who take in the heat energy around them, but fall short of being able to materialize.[2]

Some paranormal investigators also believe that ghosts can manipulate energy to communicate through electronic equipment such as voice recorders and cameras. Within ghost hunting and parapsychology, Electronic Voice Phenomena (EVP) are sounds found on electronic recordings that are interpreted as spirit voices that have been either unintentionally recorded or intentionally requested and recorded. Basically, you leave a tape or digital recorder in a haunted location. The location is then left undisturbed for a sufficient amount of time. When the recording is played back, voices, bizarre noises, or other abnormalities are heard and

believed to be those of ghosts. Another technique used is to actually attempt to communicate with ghosts by asking them questions and listening to the recordings to determine if the spirits will answer. TV shows and Internet sites are filled with examples of EVPs, if you are interested. Most often, evidence of the afterlife is presented in EVPs and video recordings.

Terrah and Jenn were teenagers growing up in the 1990s. Often, they would have sleep-overs at Terrah's house where they would record themselves singing the top pop songs of the day. They used a popular recording device in the 90s called the Talkboy, which was a handheld cassette player with a microphone allowing for instant playback. Often, they would record themselves singing and be able to play it back to hear how they sounded. One evening, while in the middle of singing to a favorite song, the radio went dead. They were confused, as the rest of the lights in the house were working fine. Moments after the radio had gone silent, Terrah witnessed a white mist in her doorway. Terrah screamed and immediately ran to Jenn. Both girls reported seeing the same white mist as it moved from the doorway to Terrah's closet and then back out the doorway. The girls immediately ran out of the room and spent the night over at Jenn's house. The next day, upon returning home, Terrah realized she never turned the Talkboy off after they witnessed the ghostly mist. She played the tape back and right at the moment that the ghostly mist had appeared, the tape became extremely distorted and a man's voice was heard saying "I forgot my coat." The rest of that tape recorded normally.

In this case, the cassette that was recording picked up the abnormalities.

Ghosts' apparent need for energy begs the questions: If energy is so important, why aren't there more ghosts in buildings or places with high amounts of energy such as electrical stations, TV stations, battery factories, or computer companies? And if ghosts need energy to present themselves, shouldn't they be more active when humans are using the most energy, which is during the daylight hours?

If ghosts exist and they need to use energy, we are best served to educate ourselves about energy and then try to specifically describe the energy which could be associated with ghostly experiences.

Electricity

Electricity is a form of energy and is probably the most important discovery to humankind, as it led to fundamental changes in quality of life, commercial productivity, and in society as a whole. Anyone who has been in a blackout for an extended period understands that we rely very heavily on electricity. It is hard to imagine life without lights, televisions, radios, telephones, computers, or microwaves. As important and crucial as electricity is to us as humans, it is often misunderstood or taken for granted. Along with its benefits for external society, electricity is also crucial to functioning inside our bodies via signals, which cause numerous chemical reactions as well as causing our hearts to beat. Electricity in its simplest form is the interaction of atomic particles called electrons and protons.

Electricity is the movement or accumulation of negatively charged electrons in relation to positively charged protons. Electrical forces are responsible for holding body cells together and nerve fibers are used to transfer electrical signals in the body. Electrical forces are wholly fundamental in holding all matter together. For example, as you read this sentence, electrical currents move along nerve cells from your eyes to your brain, allowing you to make sense of the words in this sentence. All organisms generate tiny electrical currents when their nerves fire.

Electromagnetic Fields or EMFs

An electrical field forms around any electric charge; therefore, any object or organism that has electrical currents also has an electrical field. The field is the area around the object, and if anything entered the field, that object would feel a force. Just as any object entering the field would feel a force, so would the original object.

Electric field strength decreases with distance and increases with the size of the charge producing the field. When you think about this for a moment, it is rather interesting, as space is essentially altered by the presence of the charged object and the objects that enter that field feel the strange and abnormal qualities of that altered space. Let’s use a metaphor which is somewhat disgusting and involves body odor to better understand the effects of these fields. Everyone has body odor to some degree; however, certain people have intense and powerful body odor. The closer we get to the person, the stronger effect the body odor has on our sense of smell and,

of course, the farther away we are from the person, the less we can perceive the odor. The same is true for electrical fields.

Electricity and magnetism are closely related and represent the electromagnetic force. However, electric fields and magnetic fields are not the same. A magnetic field represents effects or forces around a standard magnet, which are visible by simply throwing iron fillings near a magnet. The alignment represented by the iron filling is the magnetic field. The Earth has a magnetic field due to our molten iron core. The Earth's magnetic field is very important, and its effects will be discussed further in upcoming chapters. What is interesting is that when an electric current flows through a wire, not only does it produce an electrical field, but also a magnetic field. This was discovered by Hans Christian Oersted in 1820 as he placed a compass near a current-carrying wire and noticed that the needle would realign. Albert Einstein showed in his theory of relativity that the magnetic field by a moving electric charge is caused by a warping of the charge's electric field. This electromagnetic field (EMF) contains both an electrical field and a magnetic field. Around a direct current (DC), the EMF is stable and the strength depends upon the amount of current flowing in the wire. If the electrical current in the wire is fluctuating, the magnetic fields will have the same fluctuations. A field fluctuating in this fashion theoretically extends out into space to the end of the universe.[3] Robert Becker, an orthopedic surgeon and researcher in electrophysiology/electromedicine states, "Every time you use your toaster, the fields around it perturb charged particles in the farthest galaxies ever so slightly."[4] The speed that this EMF travels is the same as the speed of light. The EMF also has a wavelength which is dependent on its frequency. For example, a 1 Hz frequency has a wavelength in millions of miles.

All electromagnetic fields are force fields which carry energy and produce an action at a distance.[5] One of the problems faced in physics is that these EMFs have characteristics of both waves and particles.[6] All the possible frequencies of EMFs can be put onto what is called the electromagnetic spectrum. This electromagnetic spectrum consists of both waves and particles, which include cosmic rays, gamma rays, X-rays, radio waves, ultra-violet rays, visible light, infrared radiation, and microwaves.

Our world and universe are full of electromagnetic energy, even though it is invisible to the naked eye. Changing radio stations in your car,

watching TV, and heating up leftovers in a microwave are all examples of using electromagnetic energy. Electromagnetic energy surrounds us as humans; however, the human eye can only detect a small portion of this energy,: visible light.

The point of the preceding information is to communicate that we are in an ocean of electromagnetic energy during every moment of the day. As humans, we cannot escape the electromagnetic spectrum nor would it be beneficial to do this, as we will find that certain types of electromagnetic energy are essential to our existence, such as sunlight and visible light. Knowing some basics about energy, electricity, and EMFs builds our knowledge base for a deeper understanding of EMFs and ghostly phenomena.

EMFs and Ghostly Encounters

Ghost-hunting television shows such as *Ghost Hunters* or *Ghost Adventures* almost always involve one of the investigators using an EMF meter to take readings. EMF meters are the most common piece of "ghost tech" that investigators use when searching for ghosts. An EMF meter is a scientific instrument that is used to measure the electromagnetic fields that surround us, which we discussed in the previous section. Again, whenever there is a flow of energy (such as electricity), both electric and magnetic fields are created.

The intended purpose of an EMF meter is to measure fluctuations in EMFs in a certain frequency range, which is typically 50 to 60 Hz. This is the frequency that is typical of most households and offices. Most EMF meters only measure alternating current (AC) or man-made electricity. Technicians and electricians use these meters to find abnormalities in electrical circuitry, which helps them trace electrical issues, exposed wires, or improperly grounded equipment.

If you have an EMF meter, take some measurements in your house. If you have abnormally high readings, it could indicate some electrical issues. EMFs in households generally range from 0.5 milligauss (mG) to 10 mG. In the United States, magnetic fields are measured in units called milligauss (mG). A high level of EMF is relative and based on exposure and other factors. Generally speaking, it is a good idea to have areas where you sleep

and frequent be below 3 mG, and to limit exposure to appliances that emit high levels of EMFs such as fuse boxes (20 to 2000 mG), washing machines (8 to 200 mG), and microwaves (100 to 500 mG). So please do not place your bed next to a fuse box.

Despite their popularity in paranormal investigations, there is not consistent agreement on how to use an EMF meter while searching for ghosts; however, many paranormal investigators are adamant that a correlation exists. Here is an interesting account from a local paranormal investigator friend of mine which shows how EMFs, EMF meters, and ghostly experiences interact:

Joe and his family had reported strange noises throughout the night, floating lights in certain areas of the house; some had actually witnessed an apparition of an older woman several times, mostly around the staircase and master bedroom. While investigating around the staircase, the EMF meter began to fluctuate erratically. The team reported that the EMF meter was so erratic they believed it was malfunctioning and brought in another EMF meter. Currently, there were two different EMF meters acting crazy. The team had done baseline readings in the house a week previously and upon arriving at the house with no abnormalities. The team was unable to find any explanation or reason for these spikes in the room. At that moment, one of the team members felt as if someone pushed her and pulled her hair. We all then heard a disembodied voice say "leave." We complied with the voice and left the staircase. However, whatever it was, it followed us as the EMF meters continued to go crazy as we walked downstairs through the kitchen to the living room. Then, as quickly as it started, it all stopped. The meters went silent and the room's whole atmosphere felt different. We investigated that house several times after and never had the EMF fluctuations and experiences we encountered that night.

Summary

At the beginning of the chapter, we discussed the role of energy in the formation of ghosts, as well as how ghosts manifesting often affect electrical equipment. A general belief among most paranormal investigators is that ghosts are energy, and because energy disrupts the electromagnetic field, the use of EMF meters should detect a ghostly presence.

Up to this point, we have discussed theories or thoughts about what *might be* occurring in regards to electricity and ghosts. The next chapter is going to review research into electricity, EMFs, and ghostly encounters.

3
FINDING GHOSTS IN AND OUT OF THE LABORATORY

As discussed in the previous chapter, there is a prevailing belief that ghosts are energy and because energy disrupts the electromagnetic field if certain tools are used (such as EMF meters), science should be able to detect a ghost. The ability to detect a ghost, as you can imagine, is not exactly clear-cut among paranormal investigators and academics. This chapter will review research into EMFs and ghostly experiences, and at the end we will answer the following four questions:

- Why do paranormal investigators use these EMF meters when looking for ghosts?
- Are they looking for a specific measurement or reading that would indicate the presence of a ghost?
- When they get excited or report "activity," what exactly are they referring to?
- Do high EMF readings indicate the presence of ghosts?

The God Helmet

Let's look at the scientific research that involves EMFs and ghostly phenomena, which started with the work of neuropsychologist Michael Persinger in the late 1980s.

Correlations between EMFs and ghostly experiences gained popularity in the late 1980s. There was a series of experiments and correlational

studies which showed that magnetic fields (even at low levels) can be attributed to paranormal experiences. In other words, magnetic fields can bring forth ghostly experiences. This would be called a natural explanation for supernatural experiences. For example, taking LSD or other hallucinogenic drugs could cause an individual to report ghosts or believe they were communicating with deceased individuals. Are these experiences genuine paranormal experiences? They are obviously not, as they are the result of the drugs' effect on the brain. The same is true with some research regarding EMFs and hauntings, as the experiences are not genuine paranormal or ghostly experiences, but rather the result of effects of EMFs interacting with our brains.

The "God Helmet" experiments have gained the most mainstream attention and to this day remain controversial. The God Helmet (a.k.a. "Koren Helmet" after its inventor, Stanley Koren) is a standard motorcycle helmet outfitted with electrodes which can alter magnetic fields. This helmet is worn on the head of a participant. After 20 to 40 minutes of applying magnetic fields directly over the temporal lobes, an experience similar to ghostly phenomenon is reported in close to 80 percent of the participants.[1]

Persinger and his colleagues began their research attempting to find neurophysical correlates to consciousness or sense of self. However, what they found was that when they applied these complex magnetic fields over the right hemisphere of the brain, most "normal" people began to experience a "sensed presence" or sentient being.[2] The strength of the fields was between 10 milligauss (mG) and 50 milligauss (mG) at the base of the skull.

The most interesting and controversial part of Persinger's research is that the strength of these fields is commonly found in our natural environment, meaning that we are exposed to them consistently. If you took an EMF meter through your house and took readings, you should, on average, have readings below 3 mG, especially in areas where you sleep. But you would encounter spikes throughout the house around common appliances such as the refrigerator, TV, fuse boxes, microwave, and other appliances that use a fair amount of electricity. Depending on where you work (hospital, office, or factory), it would not be uncommon to be exposed to 10 to 40 mG on a consistent basis.

In summary, it was theorized that ghostly experiences could be evoked quite easily when weak, complex magnetic fields are applied along the right side of the brain and generated through the central hemisphere.[3]

Let's look specifically at haunt-type and ghostly experiences to clarify how the previously mentioned experiments correlate to paranormal investigations. In the next experiment, researchers wanted to find someone who had reported having experienced a ghost and "zap" his brain to see if ghostly experiences taking place in the real world were similar to the ghostly experiences generated via application of magnetic fields in the lab.

The following features a 45-year-old man from Canada we will refer to as "Tommy." Tommy, his wife, and their kids moved into a house in 1993 and started to experience strange things. Within days of moving, the family reported increased anxiety, depression, and malaise. Tommy also reported strange noises or "knocks," light bulbs dimming or illuminating without reason, and computer screens and electronic devices behaving strangely. While exploring a crawlspace, both Tommy and his best buddy experienced intense fear and witnessed a "form" and sensed a presence. This sounds like a pretty standard haunt or ghost report.

Tommy agreed to go to a lab where he was blindfolded and the God Helmet was placed on his head. The helmet has four solenoids on each side of the head situated at about the level of the temporal lobes. During the first 20 minutes, a frequency modulated sequence called the "Thomas Pattern" was generated. This specific pattern has been the most successful in past studies to evoke experiences similar to ghostly encounters.[4] It is important to note that these complex patterns that are created in the lab are not as common in natural settings such as at your home or work. In terms of the research discussed in this chapter, "complex" here means fluctuating or intense shifts in magnetic fields. The right hemisphere is favored with a magnetic field strength of 50 mG over the right temporal region and 10 mG over the left.

Some of the experiences reported by Tommy while wearing the God Helmet included moving shadows/tingling sensations, tactile hallucinations, feeling tense, chest tightness, a foreboding feeling, flashes of light, hints of color, tunneling experience, visual hallucinations (apparitions), and sweating. In general, Tommy reported that his experiences in the lab were

similar to the experiences he was having at his house, indicating that perhaps a ghost could be artificially created in a lab.[5]

The next logical step would be to leave the lab and take this research into the field. I believe that the next experiments led to the proliferation of EMF meters being used for paranormal investigations into hauntings.

Researchers took magnetic field measurements during a 24-hour period in a reportedly haunted house occupied by an adult couple.[6] This couple had reported waves of fear, tactile sensations, nightmares, apparitions, and a feeling of a sensed presence. The man viewed an apparition of a woman moving through their bed. Both reported odd sounds (whispers/breathing), saw shadows on the walls, and reported intense apprehension. Their child would awaken in the middle of the night screaming.

After conducting some baseline EMF readings, the researcher reported that the average background intensities would range between 1 mG and 10 mG. However, in the area by the couple's bed, where the ghostly experiences were often reported, there were variable peak strengths between 10 mG to 40 mG.[7] These momentary variations lasted from a few seconds to tens of seconds and were deemed irregular and complex. In monitoring the area for 24 hours, the researchers discovered that most of the complex fields occurred during the night. One noticeable sharp variation occurred at 3 a.m. and coincided with the woman reporting a presence and the child screaming.

The authors concluded that the complex magnetic fields were present due to the house being improperly wired, which resulted in less than optimal grounding of the house. "Transient complex temporal patterns of power-frequency magnetic fields generated by less than optimal grounding in dwellings and telluric currents may be sufficient to evoke experiences in the brains of sensitive individuals."[8]

When the researchers speak of "telluric currents," they are referring to natural electrical currents flowing on and beneath the Earth. These currents are primarily geomagnetic and are induced by changes in the Earth's magnetic field. Because we are surrounded by magnetic fields, both natural and man-made, it can sometimes be very difficult (without proper instruments) to determine which is the primary cause of the complex magnetic waves.

Another natural setting experiment (outside the laboratory) involved a 17-year-old female who reported apparitions, a sensed presence, and tactile sensations.[9] She reported an apparition walking down the hallway, footsteps, humming, and a sensed presence at the foot of her bed. Most extraordinary of all, the teen reported experiences of deep vaginal sensations and movement within her uterus. She believed that she had been impregnated by the Holy Spirit. She felt the presence of a small child on her left shoulder. It should be noted that the teen had no psychiatric history. However, she had incurred brain trauma as a young child.

This information raises some red flags regarding possible mental illness and medical causes for her hallucinations. In this study, it is mentioned that a psychiatrist had also been contacted to work with the teen. In regards to the magnetic fields, the authors at first found nothing remarkable about the house, reporting power frequency magnetic fields within the intensity of 1 mG or 3 mG. The only noted spikes occurred when heating systems or the refrigerator kicked in. But further investigation into the teen's head position while sleeping led to the discovery of complex magnetic fields emanating from an electric clock 20 cm from her head. The clock exhibited a field with an intensity between 10 to 40 mG, with a pulse pattern similar to previous studies in the laboratory. The authors report that the teen's experiences stopped shortly after removal of the clock. It was suggested that, in this case, the clock had suppressed nocturnal melatonin levels and evoked electrical seizures.

Through the years, I have had the pleasure of listening to many presentations from paranormal research groups, and every once in a while, a group will talk about a case where they simply removed an electrical item (such as a nightstand clock) and the ghostly experiences stopped. During these presentations, group members often discuss that the first role of utilizing an EMF meter is to rule out natural causes to ghostly experiences. This is a completely reasonable use for an EMF meter.

Persinger and his colleagues' work, discussed in this section, sheds light on possible natural causes to haunt-type phenomena. I speculate that only a small amount of reported paranormal phenomena are associated with complex magnetic fields in natural settings.

Many are opposed to Persinger and his colleagues' research into low-level magnetic fields affecting humans. Currently, the academic community

doesn't believe that low-level EMFs have any effects on humans. We will discuss this further in later chapters.

I want to discuss the opponents' views, as there have been difficulties replicating Persinger's results with the God Helmet. According to his opponents, the effects that Persinger attributed to magnetic fields were nothing more than the results of highly suggestible participants.[10] This finding goes hand-in-hand with later discussions in this book regarding absorption and suggestibility in Chapter 10.

Opponents of Persinger's work often start and finish with the argument that "his work has never been replicated," as they smirk. In fact, Persinger's work with spiritual experiences evoked by low-level magnetic fields has indeed been replicated.[11] Persinger and his colleagues have contributed hundreds of research articles which are related to many different areas of paranormal phenomena.

Further Magnetic Field Research

We have discussed electricity, energy, EMFs, and research into the correlations between EMFs and ghostly experiences. Because there is considerable research linking EMFs with paranormal and ghostly phenomena, and because EMFs have in recent years become synonymous with ghostly experiences, I want to briefly discuss additional research in this area.

James Braithwaite is a cognitive psychologist who has completed some of the most detailed magnetic surveillance of an allegedly haunted location. In order to complete this precise and detailed magnetic field survey of the property, Braithwaite and his associates used what is called the Magnetic Anomaly Detection System (MADS).[12]

The MADS allows for very specific measurement from two sensors which are time-linked. This allows for increased accuracy and sample reading. In a span of four hours, Braithwaite's team gathered more than 90,000 magnetic samples from both sensors. This sample size would be impossible to amass utilizing a handheld EMF meter.

Braithwaite uses the term "Experience Inducing Fields" (EIFs) to describe any form of magnetic field (geomagnetic or man-made) which elicits paranormal or haunt-type phenomena. As mentioned earlier in this

chapter, both complex geomagnetic fields and EMFs of diverse frequencies and amplitudes could lead to haunt-type phenomena.

Braithwaite took his high-tech equipment to Muncaster Castle in England and set the system up in a room called the Tapestry Room (TR), which, based on previous eyewitness accounts and experiences, was the setting for a great number of ghostly occurrences and haunt-type phenomena. Commonly reported phenomena in the TR prior to Braithwaite's experiment included sensed presence, visual shadows/apparitions, hearing footsteps, headaches, tactile hallucinations (being touched), dizziness, and a feeling of weight on the chest. Most notably, individuals reported hearing children crying and an adult attempting to comfort the child.[13] Haunt-type phenomena in this room had been taking place since the 1960s and all had occurred in the same location in the room—on the right side of the window (children crying) as the eye witness was laying on their back in the bed. Because the position and experiences were universal, it gave the researchers the ability to investigate specific regions or locations.[14]

The first order of business was placement of the two sensors which would obtain magnetic field measurements. Sensor A was placed in the pillow region of the bed where the person's head would rest, and Sensor B was placed near the window where the voices were reported to emanate. Each sensor was oriented so that the x-axis was pointing East-West, the y-axis North-South, and z-axis Up-Down. Again, the sensors gathered more than 90,000 magnetic samples between the two sensors.[15]

Here is a brief explanation of the importance of the axis readings in regards to magnetic fields. Handheld EMF meters are either single axis or triple axis meters. Triple axis meters are more expensive and accurate, at least in the hands of a novice. Single axis meters have only one coil or inductor to measure the magnetic field (MF); therefore, the meter's inductor must be pointing the same way as the MF to get an accurate reading. This can involve moving or tilting the meter to find the highest reading, which is time consuming. The three axis meters have three inductors or coils to measure the MF on the X, Y, and Z axes; therefore, no matter where the MFs are coming from, you will get an accurate reading.

Braithwaite's study looked specifically at the average total overall magnetic field and the range and standard deviation for each axis (X, Y, and

Z). The average overall field includes alternating current (AC) and direct current (DC) fields together. As you remember, DC magnetic fields emanate from the Earth naturally or result from batteries. DC fields are generally constant or static. AC magnetic fields emanate from man-made electrical systems (lamps, toasters, hair dryers).

Here is what Braithwaite's team discovered. Sensor A (30491 nT or 304.91 mG) had a much lower overall field measurement than Sensor B (77857 nT or 778.57 mG).[16] These might seem like extremely high readings. However, the average geomagnetic field (GMF) at the Earth's surface is 500 mG or 50000 nT, and as this location is a castle in England, limited man-made electrical variables were present. Geomagnetic fields (GMFs) or the Earth's magnetic field is the magnetic force that surrounds the Earth. The Earth's magnetic field is largely produced through the movement of molten iron in the Earth's core, as well as planetary rotation. Therefore, the readings were most likely predominately GMFs. It should also be noted that GMFs or natural magnetic fields are not generally attributed to negative health effects and are actually believed to be beneficial to humans and animals. Again, there is a difference between man-made (AC) EMFs and natural GMFs.

The readings obtained are far more specific, accurate, and detailed than any other experiment in the past. An intriguing aspect of these measurements is the difference between the readings in such a short distance. In this case, if a person walked from the window to the bed which is estimated to be 22 feet they would, in that short walk, experience a difference of 473 mG. This spatial difference in GMFs was also reported in other reportedly haunted locations where GMF readings at one end of the duplex being investigated was 561 mG and at the other end was 26 mG.[17] The researchers in that experiment believed that movement of people in the duplex from areas of low to areas of high GMFs led to ghostly phenomena.

Extreme measurement differences were also found in the bed area of the Tapestry Room. The center of the bed was around 964 mG and just 35 inches from that, in the pillow area, it was 304 mG (a difference of 600 mG).[18] When looking at the variance in the X, Y, and Z axes for both sensors, the results showed that the pillow area sensor was "much greater and statistically distinguishable" than the window sensor, essentially stating that the area around the pillow had more magnetic variance/complexity than

the sensor by the window.[19] The X (North-South) and Y (East-West) axes had the most variability, and the authors looked at the ranges for these readings. Range is a statistical term meaning the difference between the highest and lowest values. Braithwaite reports that they discovered a fluctuating field which they considered unpredictably high and consistent with previous research regarding field complexity related to haunt-type phenomena.[20]

This haunted location was the subject of two additional experiments to further clarify what made this castle magnetically special. More detailed analysis of AC and DC fields, as well as frequency, were obtained.[21,22] Again, the field variability of the DC field or geomagnetic/natural field in the bed area (pillow, bed center, bed foot) proved to be the biggest contributor, with simple normal movements during sleep (while on an iron mesh bed) generating low frequency complex magnetic fields.[23]

To recap, Experience Inducing Fields (EIFs), which are magnetic fields that induce ghostly experiences, occur around 10–30 mG around the skull region and obviously require the field to be complex and variable. Also, iron mesh bed supports as well as electrical equipment are possible contributors to this complex field.[24] These EIFs exist in the background magnetic fields already present and there exists a time-varying complex field in amplitude-modulated, frequency-modulated, or complex pulse pattern sequences.

Summary

It is evident that we are immersed in all types of geomagnetic and electromagnetic fields, which occur as the result of man-made electricity or naturally occurring magnetic fields produced by the Earth. We are constantly navigating the ocean of the electromagnetic spectrum with little knowledge of its effects. What is clear from the research presented in this chapter is that, at times, the EMFs that are constantly surrounding us can be manipulated due to mundane things (such as clocks and iron-mesh beds) to form complex and fluctuating magnetic fields which can induce ghostly experiences.

Are these results a 100 percent conclusive and applicable to all hauntings? Obviously not; however, what the research into magnetic fields

does suggest is that, much like the other topics discussed in early chapters, one must be aware of magnetic fields when discussing the factors that cause hauntings.

Not everyone is susceptible to hallucinate when subjected to EIFs and estimates are that 20 to 30 percent of the population are susceptible due to increased neuronal instability.[25] The 20 to 30 percent who are susceptible need to be exposed to these EIFs for at least 20 to 30 minutes. Braithwaite concludes that research into complex magnetic fields is "unlikely to be a common cause of haunt reports and is, almost certainly, not as common as other psychological factors such as expectation, prior-beliefs, suggestion, and cognitive biases."[26]

As we can see, EMF readings do have a place in regards to ghostly experiences. Whether EMFs disrupt or affect our brains leading to ghostly experiences or are the result of ghosts manifesting is an interesting question for which I do not have an answer. However, based on the previous research, it is clear that complex magnetic fields do contribute to ghostly experiences. Let's go back to the four questions at the beginning of the chapter and see if we might now better answer them.

Why do paranormal investigators use these EMF meters when looking for ghosts?

Most paranormal investigators use EMF meters to rule out natural causes to ghostly experiences such as a bedside clock that is emitting complex EMFs leading to physical symptoms that can mimic ghostly experiences. Some paranormal investigators have a different perspective on the role of an EMF meter, which is that it can detect a ghostly presence. Also, most paranormal investigators do not have access to expensive high-tech equipment to measure GMFs or natural magnetic fields, so the readings they get do not take into account the role of GMFs in ghostly experiences.

Are they looking for a specific measurement or reading that would indicate the presence of a ghost?

After reading this chapter, we know that low-level complex or fluctuating EMFs in certain frequencies can cause physical symptoms which mimic ghostly experiences. Erratic, fluctuating, or very intense shifts in EMFs can be defined as complex and, perhaps, cause physical and neurological changes in the body and brain eliciting reactions such as sensed presence, visual images, tingling feelings, and other physical

reactions. On the other side of that, it has been speculated that a ghost manifesting itself causes a disruption in the EMF, which can be detected by an EMF meter. The general idea among paranormal investigators is that erratic and fluctuating EMFs without explanation indicate the presence of a ghost.

In searching the Internet and speaking with paranormal investigators, there is not an EMF reading which definitely proves a ghost is present. However, the general consensus among paranormal investigators is that ghosts typically manifest in the range of 2 mG to 7 mG and only if an electrical source cannot be traced or attributed to these readings. It has also been suggested that EMF fluctuations caused by ghosts move throughout the room or house haphazardly, much like a person walking. Paranormal investigators report that these fluctuating and haphazard readings, at times, will disappear and reappear without any explanation.

When paranormal investigators get excited or report "activity," what exactly are they referring to?

Paranormal investigators denote activity when they encounter unexplained shifts or fluctuations in EMFs that do not have a natural explanation. If they encounter a floating or fluctuating EMF that appears to be moving around the house or following a person, this might indicate a ghost that is moving freely throughout the house. The idea is that man-made ambient EMFs would not move about the house in this manner and could be traced or attributed to an electrical source. For example, a fluctuating EMF next to a TV or dishwasher has an explainable source; however, if that fluctuating EMF is moving throughout the house, this indicates the presence of a ghost.

Do high EMF readings indicate the presence of ghosts?

The research that was discussed in this chapter suggests that low-level fluctuating or complex EMFs and not high levels of EMFs are correlated with ghostly experiences such as visual apparitions, auditory phenomena, or sense of presence. Even ghost hunters who use EMF meters to seek ghosts believe that "activity" is generally found in low-level fluctuations (2–7 mG).

I understand why there is some confusion regarding whether high or low-level EMFs are associated with ghostly experiences because *chronic* exposure to high levels of EMF may cause health problems and physical symptoms which could mimic some ghostly experiences. Commonly

reported physical symptoms associated with chronic exposure to high EMFs include burning sensations, tingling, dizziness, increased stress, sleep disturbances, decreased concentration, and headaches, to name a few. Here is an example from a well-respected paranormal team in Ohio:

> During our investigation, we entered the daughter's bedroom and were immediately overwhelmed by a strong "energy" that was in the room. I actually started to get a headache, and was also becoming nauseous, as were a couple other investigators. We conducted an EMF sweep in the bedroom and discovered a child's fan sitting on the dresser was emitting an EMF of 171.4 milligauss! EMF readings in the master bedroom reached levels of 60–70 milligauss! The majority of homes we investigated generally have readings of 0–3 milligauss...we advised our client to get rid of the fan immediately, which they did. After that, they never had another problem and were able to sleep comfortably.[27]

In my interactions with paranormal investigators, if they encounter a case where the EMF readings are exceedingly high on a consistent basis, they will encourage the homeowner to call an electrician to look into the wiring of the house, as being exposed to consistently high readings could cause health problems and physical reactions. It should again be pointed out that simply walking by a generator emitting 20,000 mG won't instantly cause reactions, but it is the continued exposure that will result in negative symptoms.

Currently, you have a strong foundation regarding research and possible explanations for hauntings and ghosts from skeptics and believers. What is apparent is that energy, electricity, and ghostly encounters are somehow correlated. What is not clear is whether ghosts are caused by EMFs affecting our brains, or if ghosts are external beings who use the existing EMFs to manifest and, therefore, can be detected. It is at this point were any advancements have stalled.

Again, the theories related to EMFs discussing popular ghost theories focus on the existence of an external entity or energy causing the haunt-type phenomena. Maybe the energy needed for ghosts to manifest themselves is not derived from external sources (such as batteries, cameras, etc.), but rather from human energy or the bioenergy of living beings. Perhaps this is

why ghostly encounters primarily occur at night when man-made electricity is being generated at its lowest level, making bioenergy most prominent. As we have discussed, it's not the magnitude but, rather, the fluctuation and complexity of EMFs which are linked to ghosts, and the human body most certainly can produce these fluctuating and complex EMFs. Humans are electrical beings, meaning any involvement of humans automatically involves electricity. As we have mentioned, there is no debate about the correlations between ghosts and electricity.

The next chapter is going to discuss psychological aspects of ghostly phenomena which are the catalyst or first condition or process in my ghostly ingredients theory, which is necessary to experience ghostly phenomena. Chapter 5 (Internal Energy and Bioenergetics) and Chapter 6 (External Information Acquisition) will discuss, separately, the other conditions or processes in this equation for ghostly phenomena.

Psychological Aspects
+
Changes in Internal Energy or Bioenergetics
+
External Information Acquisition
=
Ghostly Experience

Once we are familiar with these three processes, I will provide case examples of actual ghostly encounters.

4
PSYCHOLOGICAL ASPECTS OF GHOSTLY PHENOMENA

Psychological processes such as emotional distress absolutely must be present in order for a paranormal of apparitional experience to occur. If you recall from Chapter 1, I'm proposing that hauntings, apparitions, and ghostly encounters are a combination of psychological processes, human biological processes, and external environmental processes. The first step or catalyst to a ghostly experience involves psychological aspects, specifically emotional distress, which will be discussed in this chapter. The depth and range of emotional distress varies with individuals. Generally speaking, emotional distress would include overwhelming feelings of depression, anxiety, irritability, grief, hatred, jealousy, fear, and so on. Dr. Nandor Fodor, who was a prominent psychoanalytic therapist in the 1930s, believed that subjective issues such as stress, depression, and trauma are necessary to a haunting.[1] Fodor proceeds to say that, emotionally speaking, if haunted individuals aren't at their emotional worst point, little or nothing distinguishes them or their environment from non-haunted houses. Fodor points out the flaws of scientific observation and objective measurements, stating that the very presence of an observer changes the emotional atmosphere in the house, the reason being that people who claim that their house is haunted change, as does the family dynamic. This makes sense because, as humans, we're hard-wired to try and make a good impression upon others. Simply put, the mere presence of an observer changes a very important psychological aspect of a haunted house.

So, what if we take out all human interaction and simply place a video camera in a reportedly haunted house, with no live person nearby for many

miles? This type of objective measurement will fail as we have again taken away the important aspect of human emotions and psychological dynamics, which are essential for a paranormal experience to occur. Taking away human emotions and dynamics in regards to paranormal experiences is similar to trying to grill a burger without a flame or any heat source.

The most current trend in ghost theories and explanations is related to quantum physics. Areas such as wormhole theory, string theory, and the belief of alternative universes have been hot topics among paranormal celebrities, paranormal discussion groups, in books, and throughout the Internet. What these theories don't take into account are humans as individuals and/or the importance of human emotional dynamics in hauntings. This, in my opinion, is a grave omission.

Carl Jung, a psychoanalyst and colleague of Sigmund Freud, wrote on topics related to paranormal experiences and emotions. Jung confessed that his first paranormal experience occurred at a young age when there was considerable tension in his house. Jung believed without a doubt that heighted emotionality was necessary for psychic conditions and paranormal experiences to occur.

Psychological aspects are also correlated with poltergeists or recurrent spontaneous psychokinetic (RSPK) phenomena. In parapsychology, the term "RSPK" is often used instead of "poltergeist" as it is becoming more accepted that poltergeist phenomena such as objects flying across the room are not related to ghosts, but rather to humans under emotional distress utilizing psychokinesis. Psychokinesis (PK) is often called "mind over matter" or the mental action on the environment. PK refers to the ability to move physical objects or affect the property of objects by using the power of the mind. Uri Geller claims to use psychokinesis to bend spoons. Examples of psychokinesis in popular films would be "The Force" in *Star Wars* and the P.K.E. meter in the 1984 movie *Ghostbusters*. The premise of "The Force" is the ability to move objects by using your mind. I'm not a *Star Wars* fan, but I do remember psychokinesis saving the Jedi on numerous occasions. The P.K.E. meter used in *Ghostbusters* is based on parapsychological research, at least in theory. The P.K.E. meter (or its full name, Psycho-Kinetic Energy meter) is used to track the location of ghosts by detecting psycho-kinetic energy. Because ghosts can't just pick objects up, they use psychokinesis to move them. My guess is the premise of the device is that when ghosts move objects, they give off psycho-kinetic

energy; so if you have a device that detects this energy, it will lead you to a ghost.

Paranormal researcher Louisa Rhine collected 178 reports of psychokinetic activity[2] and she found some interesting correlations. The PK cases usually had some sort of psychological connection associated with a crisis or death of a distant person. There were 49 cases in which clocks stopped or showed erratic behaviors. In 37 of those 49 cases, the stopping coincided with the death of the person. In 30 of those cases, the clock itself was personally meaningful to the person in the crisis. There were 65 cases of objects such as pictures or statues falling from walls or shelves. In 18 of those cases, the picture falling was actually of the person suffering the crisis, and 13 of the other pictures or objects that fell held some sort of relevance to this person. More recent research also shows that this symbolic or meaningful aspect permeates RSPK investigations.

As William Roll and Michael Persinger write:

> We are not entirely in the dark about the phenomenon (RSPK): a person, sometimes more than one, is nearly always at the center of the disturbances; and these disturbances often involve objects that belong to individuals with whom the central person has an emotional link...RSPK is not a nonpersonal force; it is psychological as well as energetic.[3]

Research shows significant correlations between beliefs in a paranormal experience and physical trauma. There is also research suggesting that paranormal experiences occur more frequently after a negative life event.[4] The common belief is that paranormal experiences are coping strategies to adapt to psychological trauma such as physical, sexual, or emotional abuse. I don't disagree with this viewpoint on certain occurrences, but what if the psychological trauma, in a way, predisposed the individual for a paranormal experience? What if the trauma made the individual more vulnerable or susceptible for paranormal experiences due to their psychological distress? This might account for the increased frequency of paranormal experiences after negative life events.

Repressed Emotions

Michael Jawer, author of *The Spiritual Anatomy of Emotions*, also believes that emotions, more specifically the repression of emotions due to past trauma, are the means to paranormal experiences. According to Jawer, "Feelings, and their expression as emotions, are the bedrock on which human life exists...to the extent that feelings are recognized and given release, the individual is healthy; to the extent that they remain subconscious and bottled up, various forms of illness will result."[5]

Jawer calls these repressed emotions "frozen energy." His believes that emotional energy is similar to other forms of energy in that it can be stored, focused, drained, or liberated. Frozen energy is essentially feelings held in the body and prevented from emotional release. Individuals whose emotional reactions are frozen during a threatening event and never released are similar to being "pent-up" or residing in an emotional holding pen, leading to symptoms including anxiety, fear, sleep problems, moodiness, dissociative personality traits, and psychosomatic complaints. Jawer contends that the frozen energy of stress reactions, combined with preoccupations in the brain generate paranormal experiences (such as ghosts, poltergeists, and hauntings).[6] According to Jawer, people can carry frozen energy inside themselves for years, being haunted by dissociated memories and feelings without even being consciously aware of them.[7] He again believes that if this energy is not released, it becomes responsible for ghosts and poltergeists.

Jawer clarifies his hypothesis, comparing post-operative phantom pain to apparitions. Phantom pain is sensations felt in a body part that is no longer present—for example, a diabetic patient who has a toe amputated but claims to still feel sensation in the amputated toe. Once thought to be psychological, current research indicates it has a neurobiological basis.[8] The sensations can be reported immediately after the amputation or even years later. The incidence of phantom pain in patients that required amputations in some studies is reported to be as high as 78 percent.[9] Jawer states that "like ghosts, they are apparitional—and their effects are perceived.... Unlike ghosts, they relate to a specific body part that used to be part of the person."[10]

There are also correlations between emotions and the severity of phantom pain. Research suggests that a person's distress prior to the amputation correlates with the severity of phantom pain post-surgery. Issues

such as incomplete mourning (for the appendage), suddenness of loss, and lack of adequate psychological preparation contribute to the occurrence of phantom pain.[11] Jawer contends that those experiencing phantom pain are suffering from dissociation as the result of frozen energy due to trauma (loss of appendage), which if properly processed would alleviate the symptoms.

Unlike Jawer, I don't believe that repressed emotions of past trauma or frozen energy play such a significant role. I believe that *active emotional turmoil resulting from a crisis reaction* is the catalyst. In my clinical experiences with crisis intervention in emergency rooms, the amount of emotional distress experienced in an acute crisis state or catastrophic emotional episode is so intense that it can, in a way, be tangible or felt by others. Patients' repressed emotions, chronic depressive symptoms, and PTSD are real, important, and need attention. However, this is not the same as those in active crisis (for example, death of spouse/child, suicide attempt, finding a loved one after a suicide attempt, active suicidal thoughts with a plan or intent, witnessing a death, etc.).

Though repressed emotions and "frozen energy" need to be processed, these chronic repressed emotions don't have enough "power" to evoke a true paranormal experience. But these repressed emotions could predispose an individual or lower their threshold to make them more susceptible to paranormal experiences when a future crisis does occur.

Emotional Crisis

Let's look at three important concepts in crisis research: Acute Stress Reaction, Acute Stress Disorder, and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). The *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, 5th Edition* (DSM-5) is the text that mental health clinicians use to diagnose or categorize mental health disorders. A simplistic way to categorize is that overwhelming symptoms within 48 hours post-trauma or crisis are deemed to be Acute Stress Reactions. Symptoms from 48 hours to one month post-trauma are classified as Acute Stress Disorder. Symptoms persisting after one month to years post-trauma are classified as PTSD. For this discussion, we are going to focus on Acute Stress Reaction (ASR) and the first hours after a trauma.

Everyone responds to an emotional crisis or trauma differently, but the first step is to define and become more familiar with a crisis and how it affects individuals. According to the *Crisis Intervention Handbook*, a crisis is "a period of disequilibrium experienced as a result of a hazardous event or situation...that cannot be remedied by using familiar coping strategies."[12] The hazardous event "disrupts the person's homeostatic balance and puts them in a vulnerable state."[13] If the crisis continues and cannot be resolved through coping strategies, tension rises until the person enters a state of disequilibrium and disorganization. This state is often referred to as the acute stage of crisis or "active crisis." The acute stage of crisis occurs soon after the hazardous or traumatic event and can result in reactions of helplessness, confusion, anxiety, extreme anger, inappropriate calmness, shock, disbelief, numbness, insomnia, hyper arousal, headaches, depression, and withdrawal. These reactions seem reasonable; however, there are often more extreme reactions which can include psychomotor agitation or psychosomatic complaints (for example, trembling, constant moving, and inability to see, hear, or use parts of the body without a physical cause). The person in acute crisis may also be disorganized and incoherent. Reactions such as being disorganized can seem far-fetched to those who never have experienced or witnessed someone in a severe emotional crisis, but they do occur. The best way to explain this is that such a sudden change in one's life can create an explosive release of emotions which overwhelms the coping mechanisms.[14] Fear, rage, irrational thoughts, depression, anxiety, and guilt are common. Physical reactions include trembling (often occurring for days after the crisis), vomiting, nausea, chest palpitations, racing pulse, muscle pains, dizziness, fatigue, insomnia, hypersomnia, hallucinations, and flashbacks.

Let's define what constitutes a hazardous or traumatic event. This is extremely difficult as stressors affect each person in an individual and specific way. According to the DSM-5, traumatic events must fall into these categories:[15]

- Experienced an event or events that involved a threat of death, actual or threatened serious injury, or actual or threatened physical or sexual violation of himself or herself.
- Personally witnessed an event or events that involved the actual or threatened death, serious injury, or physical or sexual violation of

others.
- Learned of such harm coming to a close relative or close friend.
- Underwent repeated or extreme exposure to aversive details of unnatural death, serious injury, or serious assault or sexual violation of others.

Trauma and crises are often used interchangeably to describe someone who has undergone or is going through a situation that causes extreme distress. Trauma indicates a specific triggering event. These triggering events could be witnessing a death or surviving a disaster or sexual assault. Traumatic events are unpredictable, uncontrollable, and change our values, priorities, and how we view others and the world.[16] A crisis or hazardous event does not necessarily fall into the category of a traumatic event; however, both lead to active crisis reactions. Here is an example:

> In one situation, the death of a husband might be shattering enough in its effect to send the wife into disequilibrium at once; in another set of circumstances, we might find a series of stresses; the husband being fired from his job, followed by his wife's getting ill, followed by trouble with his in-laws, followed by the adolescent son's leaving home. While any one of these events might have been handled with relative adequacy, together they form a chain of debilitating blows which leads the individual into a state of active crisis.[17]

The sudden death of a loved one can be a traumatic event, and as individuals we struggle to cope, often convincing ourselves that this event was a mistake or part of a bad dream, and expecting the loved one to return home, believing that we see them in crowds, and even report feeling their presence.

In a year-long, longitudinal study, researchers interviewed widows during their first year of bereavement. They discovered that almost all the widows reported sensing their husband's presence. Some widows reported what could be categorized as ghost or haunt-type phenomena: hearing their husband's key in the door, seeing him out of the corner of their eye, seeing the husband in the living room, and seeing the husband standing at the door.[18] The single most important determinant of the sense of presence of the deceased was whether or not their husband's death was anticipated.[19] In

instances of sudden death, the unexpected shock of their husbands' passing did not allow them time to prepare themselves. In sudden death, we are unable to prepare, express our feelings to the loved one, clear up misunderstandings, and say goodbye. If we are forced to process all of our feelings in our own minds, this is not the same as addressing important issues face-to-face with the dying loved one. In order to ensure the appropriate processing of grief, saying goodbye and viewing the deceased are important steps in facing the reality of the death and accepting it. If the body is not found, then grief counselors are encouraged to review with survivors their mental images of the deceased, which includes imagining the body and what it looks like.[20] Crisis research suggests that this is an important part of recovering from grief.

Perhaps bereavement apparitions or visits from the deceased so shortly after death are important to our psyches. Perhaps this is a way to process emotions that occur to ensure the psychological well-being of the survivor. Saying goodbye to the deceased is important and perhaps apparitions are a natural function of the psyche moving through the stages of a crisis. In other words, in cases of sudden or unexpected deaths, where the survivor is not able to accept or process the death, our unconscious mind attempts to display these mental images in the forms of apparitions to move us through recovery and acceptance. Often, individuals report feeling more at ease or accepting of the loved one's death after seeing the bereavement apparition. I have been told by those who experienced these apparitions that they feel comforted by knowing that their loved one is doing well.

Summary

Emotions have always been linked with paranormal phenomena. Early psychical researchers such as Carl Jung, Eleanor Sidgwick, and Louisa Rhine all believed that heightened emotions were necessary for psi and paranormal phenomena to occur. Psychological factors, in recent years, are believed to be at the core of poltergeist and PK phenomena. Repressed emotions, unresolved grief, and lack of proper psychological preparation contribute extensively to the development of phantom pain symptoms for those who have lost an appendage. Crisis, trauma, acute stress, and life-threatening events cause an explosion of emotional distress and turmoil that

can reverberate throughout the entire body, affecting one mentally and physically. Emotions are misunderstood. Science and medicine have not even scratched the surface on how powerful and all-encompassing emotions can be. To give you an example, let's look at PTSD. The act of witnessing a family member, friend, parent, or spouse being killed, abused, or assaulted can cause years of intense fear, helplessness, trouble sleeping, nightmares, panic attacks, feeling detached, depression, loss of interest, guilt, shame, hopelessness, suicidal thoughts, and lack of motivation.

Physical symptoms can result as well from *witnessing* a traumatic event. These symptoms can include chronic pain, headaches, stomach pain, diarrhea, tingling or burning in the chest, muscle cramps, and lower back pain. The experience of *witnessing* a trauma can bring about neurochemical changes, which can affect one's biological health, causing increased vulnerability to neurological, respiratory, and cardiovascular disorders. Those with PTSD have increased susceptibility to infections as well as immunological disorders. Consider the years of debilitating mental and physical symptoms that are endured by many and that were caused by the seeing something that was emotionally traumatic.

Society places great emphasis on recovering or rehabilitating from a physical illness or injury (broken bone, pneumonia, infection, etc.) or surgery (removing a gallbladder, vasectomy, etc.), often recommending that the patient be on bed rest or have physical therapy for 6–8 weeks until they can resume normal functioning. Often, the patient will have to see their physician after the eight weeks to get another evaluation to ensure that they are fit to return to normal activity.

So what is the similar regimen or protocol for someone who experiences an emotionally traumatic event? There isn't one. Family or friends might tell them to "get over it," and to "move on." Or the traumatized person may set up an appointment to see a counselor or psychiatrist. Chances are they return to their job and resume their normal duties the next day. We have to be cognizant of the crippling power that emotionally traumatic events have on our ability to maintain homeostasis and function fully.

Let me introduce a case example which we will follow through the next few chapters to better illustrate my theory.

In 1973, Deborah had a 21-year-old son who had been deployed to Vietnam. According to Deborah, "I woke up one morning around 2 a.m. feeling like I had been punched in the head. I was covered in sweat, had a

terrible headache, and felt blood gushing down my face. I couldn't breathe and was gasping for air as if choking. I felt as if my lungs were filling with water or sludge, so I went to the bathroom to try and cough up the substance. I was overwhelmed with feelings of fear, sadness, and anger. Feeling weak, I sat down on the bathroom floor while crying. At that moment, I heard my son's voice saying, 'Tell my mom I love her...please tell her I love her.' My symptoms vanished within seconds. Picking myself off the floor, I looked in the mirror and saw no blood or bump that would indicate I hurt my head." A week later, Deborah learned of her son's death which occurred at the same time as her strange symptoms that evening. According to reports, he died from a gunshot to the chest and severe head trauma.

In this case, the son somehow communicated his last dying moments as well as his physical symptoms to his mother thousands of miles away. Cases like this could be viewed more as telepathy (communication at a distance) than ghost-like; however, as we will see, the experiences of telepathy and ghostly encounters often overlap. Apparitions and ghostly encounters account for only a small portion of what can be called paranormal phenomena. Paranormal and psi phenomena contain a wide range of unexplained communication, which has similarities to ghostly experiences. Telepathy is essentially communication at a distance. Telepathy can be defined as "the communication of impressions of any kind from one mind to another, independently of recognized channels of the senses."[21] What is often not discussed is that there are many cases of telepathy which are visual, as well as other cases, which involve hearing sounds and sudden overwhelming feelings of fear, concern, or alarm. These types of telepathic experiences are very similar to ghostly experiences and could easily be misperceived as a ghost, spirit, or apparition. In this scenario, the son would be the agent (sender) and the mother would be the percipient (receiver). What are the ghostly phenomena that occurred? Tactile phenomena (feeling as if blood was pouring down her head, chocking on blood, headache, weakness), auditory phenomena (hearing her son's voice), and unexplained physical and emotional reactions (fear of dying, anger, sadness).

What is the trauma or acute emotional crisis that would be the catalyst for a ghostly encounter in this example? It's the life-threatening event that occurred to the son (gunshot, head trauma). Imagine that you are shot; what

would you feel or think? You most probably would experience extreme fear, sadness, regret, anger, powerlessness, and a myriad of other volatile emotions. You would be flooded with thoughts such as, “I don’t want to die,” “I can’t believe this is the end,” “There is still more that I want to do,” and “Please God, don’t let me die!” The psychological and physical changes that occur during this catastrophic moment would be intense, exhausting, and unlike anything we have encountered thus far in our lives. Facing inevitable death is beyond words to describe. The son’s (agent) life-threatening trauma caused emotional upheaval which triggered or flipped the switch for the ghostly phenomena that the mother (percipient) experienced.

Emotions are very powerful and are strong enough to cause internal bioelectrical reactions in humans that affect us down to the tiniest molecule. Intense or acute emotional shifts related to crises are also the starting points or the catalysts for ghostly phenomena. Emotionally traumatic events trigger conscious and unconscious processes which seek to alleviate our distress or communicate it to others. When we burn or cut ourselves, the body immediately begins the healing process. This is also true when we are psychologically injured (such as during the death of spouse); our body immediately scrambles to cope, heal, and repair itself. Because humans are, in essence, an extensive collection of electrical signals (heart, nerve impulses, neurons, etc.) and electrical beings, the question is what happens to our internal electrical makeup when we experience an emotional overload? We will return to the case example at the end of the next chapter to discuss the bioenergetic fluctuations that occur due to emotional crisis to bring about the mother’s ghostly encounter.

The next chapter will discuss the internal or bioelectrical processes or fluctuations that occur as the result of emotions, trauma, and life-threatening events. Remember, any involvement of humans also includes the involvement of electricity. The next chapter discusses the role bioenergetics or the body’s internal circuitry plays in ghostly encounters.

5
INTERNAL ENERGY AND BIOENERGETICS

How do emotions affect our bodies? This chapter will discuss exactly how our emotions affect one internally, highlighting the second process or part of my equation necessary for a ghostly encounter which is internal (bioenergetic) fluctuations resulting from significant emotional distress.

Part of being human involves feeling anger, sadness, and happiness. Dr. Candace Pert has contributed a great deal to science; she is credited with discovering the opiate receptor, and she has worked diligently on AIDS treatments. Along with these accomplishments, she developed a unique perspective on how humans are affected by their emotions. Pert believed that emotions are not simply chemicals that are released in the brain, but are electrochemical signals that affect the chemistry and electricity of every cell in the body.[1] This view is radically different from the current thinking that certain neurochemicals such as serotonin and dopamine, which are produced in the brain, dictate our emotions. Certain psychiatric medications are believed to be effective as they target these chemical receptors in the brain.

Pert's view is that the brain is not the seat of emotions, but rather, that there exist molecules of emotions, which permeate throughout the entire body forming a comprehensive system of communication.[2] Pert believes that the body's internal electrical state is actually modulated or controlled by emotions. In general, the medical community, while acknowledging emotions play a role in overall wellness, believes this role to be small. Pert contends that neurotransmitters called peptides carry emotional messages and, as our emotions change or fluctuate (for example, from emotional

trauma), these peptides travel throughout the body and brain, changing the chemistry of every cell they come in contact with.[3]

It is important to stress that emotions such as sadness and fear are not just "in our heads," but affect every cell in our body. Every cell in the body has tiny receptors. The job of the receptors is to pick up on signals in the surrounding space. Once the receptors get a signal, the information in that signal is carried into the cell and triggers certain processes, which can include cell division, cell growth, repairs, and cell metabolism. The receptor and the ligands make up what Pert refers to as the "molecules of emotion." Drugs, natural ligands, and emotions operate through the same mechanism, which is binding at the site of the receptor; *therefore, your emotional state at any given moment can impact the movement, the division, and every other activity of your cells throughout your whole body*.

For example, let's say that you are in an airplane that has a malfunction and is about to crash. You most likely are going to experience an emotional crisis and be consumed with guilt, sadness, anger, regret, and fear. These emotions are going to be intense and affect every cell in your body. Emotions have always been elusive because they don't show up in X-rays, blood tests, or urine screens, but they are just as real and influential as other bodily functions, and they are responsible for creating electrical reactions in the body just as the heart does.

So where is the electrical charge for emotions coming from? When peptides bind to their receptors, an electrical charge is created which gives rise to a field of electricity which then extends throughout and even around animals and humans. Sharks, most notably, use extending electrical fields to find food. *Pert's theory on the "molecules of emotions" suggests that our physical bodies can be changed internally simply by the emotions we experience*.[4] Emotions are not compartmentalized into one area of our brain; rather, they run rampant through our whole body, encompassing all of our cells. As one can imagine, if there is an electrical charge associated with the "molecules of emotion," then what is the role of the electrical field that is produced by these emotions? I believe the role of the electrical field associated with emotions to be significant in paranormal phenomena, but before we explore this further, let's discuss other areas of research about emotions and internal electricity, a.k.a. bioenergetics.

Internal electrical field variations, which are necessary to evoke the paranormal and haunt-type experiences, are discussed in this chapter. The term "energy field" is vague and used a great deal in discussion of spiritualism or selling of products meant to miraculously heal. Energy fields are often linked with pseudoscience; however, what is fact is that the human body produces electricity. Bioelectromagnetics is the study of the interaction between electromagnetic fields and biological entities. Bioelectromagnetics includes the study of electrical or electromagnetic fields produced by living cells, tissues, and organisms.[5]

The intent of this chapter is to discuss theories related to bioenergetics or internal electrical processes that occur in humans as the result of our emotional state. I'm presenting information and research suggesting that internal electrical field variations caused by the electricity generated by volatile emotions occurs. My intent is not to suggest that one theory is paramount. Please consider these theories with an open mind. Hopefully, by the end of this chapter, you will understand and agree that emotions can lead to an internal electrical storm, which leaks out into the atmosphere.

Human Electricity and Beyond

As mentioned in previous chapters, there are a great many things that have electrical and magnetic fields, from toasters to street lamps to TVs. When we think about electricity or electrical fields, we often think about inanimate objects, which need a source of power, such as batteries or electricity to function. In reality, humans and animals have electrical and magnetic fields; therefore, any involvement of humans also includes involvement of electricity as our thoughts, emotions, and movements are all a collection of electrical signals.[6] This statement is extremely important when we are discussing any paranormal experiences because the only constant in all paranormal experiences is that of a human being present to "experience" an apparition, a poltergeist, an eerie feeling, a temperature change, an uneasiness, or any haunt-type or psi experience. Therefore, electricity, electrical fields, and magnetic fields have always been present during a paranormal experience since the dawn of time.

Humans are electrical beings; like everything with electricity flowing through it, we produce magnetic fields. Important and life-saving medical

equipment are based on human electrical signals. Examples include the electrocardiograms (EKG), which detect and record the heart's electrical activity and electroencephalographs (EEGs), which measure electrical activity in the human brain. According to physicist Robert Park, professor emeritus at the University of Maryland, humans are electrical machines:

> Our senses convert external inputs, such as sound or light, into tiny electrical currents that are processed by the brain.... A stationary electric charge has an electric field, and a moving charge has a magnetic field. We (humans) have electrical and magnetic fields.[7]

The magnetic fields we produce are extremely weak, but they can be detected with the use of sensitive equipment such as a magnetoencephalography (MEG). The MEG consists of sitting in a chair or lying on a bed while your head is inside a helmet-shaped device, which contains magnetic field sensors. The superconducting quantum interference device (SQUID) sensors passively detect the weak magnetic fields (around 10^{-14} Tesla) produced by brain activity. SQUID sensors can detect a change of energy as much as 100 billion times weaker than the electromagnetic energy that moves a compass needle. These SQUID instruments show that the flow of electricity in the brain produces magnetic fields, which extended several feet from the head.[8] Magnetic fields have energy and can carry information. Therefore, because our magnetic fields extend outward, they are interacting with the Earth's magnetic field in the atmosphere which, in a sense, is connected to everything on Earth.

To recap, we produce electricity in our bodies. This electricity creates magnetic fields and these magnetic fields extend outside our bodies into the atmosphere. Once in the atmosphere, these magnetic fields, in theory, could extend great distances. Let's say that they extend into the environment, carrying all kinds of great information. The next questions would be:

- Can living organisms detect and gather information from the Earth's magnetic field?
- Do we have a magnetic sense?

These questions will be answered in later chapters, but let's look a little deeper into what occurs internally.

Life-Fields

If energy or electricity is needed for ghosts to manifest, maybe this energy is not used from external sources such as batteries, video cameras, or computers, as many paranormal enthusiasts believe, but rather from our own internal energy or bioenergy. This may be why most ghostly encounters occur at night when external energy sources or man-made electricity is at its lowest, thus rendering our internal energy most prominent. As we have noted in Chapter 2, it is not high levels of EMF that are associated with ghostly encounters, but low-level, fluctuating, or complex EMF levels which we as humans actually generate. If these bioenergetic and internal electrical field fluctuations occur as the result of intense emotions, is there any way to measure this? It turns out there is some past research into measuring bioenergetic fields.

In this section, I discuss Harold Saxon Burr's research on life fields (L-field), also referred to as electrodynamic fields, biomagnetic fields, or bio-fields. This is not a new idea, as Burr's work was conducted in the early 20th century; even before that, most ancient civilizations and religions have concepts which equated to the L-field. The Chinese have *Qi*, the Native Americans have *Orenda*, Ancient Greece had *pneuma*, Tibetan Buddhism has *lung*, Hinduism has *prana*, and Hawaiians have *mana*. Although the L-field and these concepts are slightly different, there is a large and distinct overlap among them all, which is essentially an internal life force that surrounds us and is characterized by the energy that is vital in organizing and maintaining our bodies.

Harold Saxton Burr (1889–1973) was a professor of anatomy at the Yale University of Medicine who published more than 93 scientific papers. His research contributed to the electrical detection of cancer cells, experimental embryology, neuroanatomy, and the regeneration and development of the nervous system. He is best known for his 1972 book *Blueprint for Immortality*, which provided research and evidence that all living beings have electrodynamic fields, which he called the "blueprint for all life."

Burr's hypothesis was that humans are an electric organization, an inseparable part of the universe of law and order.[9] This electrodynamic field or L-field is, in essence, an electric bodysuit which organizes the processes, structures, and activities of the body. The organization of a living thing is established by this electrodynamic or L-field as it determines the

arrangement of the components of the organism. We each have our own electrical or L-field which guides and determines our growth, our form, our structures, our development, healing, mood, and has the responsibility of maintaining our bodies. Our bodies and our tissues are constantly changing and L-fields are in charge of guiding our body's changes. The molecules and cells which comprise the human body are constantly being torn apart and rebuilt.[10] The average age of all the cells in an adult body are 7 to 10 years old. According to an article in the *New York Times*, "The epidermis, or surface layer of the skin, is recycled every two weeks... The entire human skeleton is thought to be replaced every 10 years or so in adults, as twin construction crews of bone-dissolving and bone-rebuilding cells combine to remodel it."[11]

If we run into someone who we haven't seen in a year, there is not one molecule in their face which was present the last time we met; but due to the L-field's organizational skills, the molecules are arranged into the familiar pattern that we can recognize. This is truly amazing. An analogy that Burr uses is as follows:

> Most people who have taken high school science will remember that if iron filings are scattered on a card held over a magnet, they will arrange themselves in the pattern of the "lines of force" on the magnet's field. And if the filings are thrown away and fresh ones scattered on the card, the new filings will assume the same pattern as the old.[12]

In order to test the existence of these L-fields, the first and most difficult step was to develop unique voltmeters and electrodes to measure and further investigate these electrodynamic fields. Burr, along with his colleagues Filmer Northrop, Cecil Lane (physicist), and Leslie Nims (chemist), developed the Burr-Lane-Nims high sensitivity milli and micro voltmeters. (If you are interested in reading about the more technical aspects of these instruments, please refer to either Dr. Burr's book *Blueprint for Immortality* or *Electrodynamic Man* by Leonard Ravitz.)

The instruments sought to measure the magnitude or intensity (E) and the direction or polarity (H) of these internal electromagnetic or L-fields. The directional properties are described as plus or minus polarity. What is measured is not a specific value, but the differences between any two points

measured or potential/voltage gradients.[13] The instruments were designed to measure changes between the two electrodes placed on the living organism. The electrodes were small enough to measure voltage gradients in seeds, frogs' eggs, and even slime molds.[14] They reported that they found L-fields around, and electric potentials on the surfaces of organisms such as worms, hydras, salamanders, humans, and other mammals. Most of the measurements in Burr's research are in millivolts which are one thousandth of a volt (1/1000). Voltage is the difference of electrical potential between two points of an electrical or electronic circuit, expressed in volts.

According to Burr, any variations which occurred in his measurements were assumed to be variations in the flow of energy in the system (body). He is clear that these variations in the flow of energy can arise due to chemistry; however, they again are controlled and directed by the L-field of the organism. All living things are unique and individualized. We are all individualized in our appearance, our biological processes, our reactions to certain chemicals, foods, and even in how we perceive the world.

L-fields are unique and they are not the same for everyone or everything. Therefore, it is important to get baseline readings of organisms during an extended period of time in order to note when a change occurs. Measuring L-fields is somewhat similar to measuring our temperatures with a thermometer. If we take our temperature several times a day for a period of time, we will see that we have a baseline or average temperature. When we are sick, we will notice that our temperature reading will change, which indicates that the body is addressing a problem. This is relatable with the measurement of L-fields as shifts or changes in the L-field can indicate changes in the body from baseline. These changes can indicate growth, biological processes, emotional lability, and sickness.

Our electric bodysuit is not isolated and is affected by the fields in existence around us such as UV light, lunar phases, and other environmental and man-made electromagnetic fields. As mentioned earlier, these electric body suits are present in all living forms (such as animals, humans, trees, and seeds). While using his instruments to detect and measure the L-fields in living things, Burr found that these fields varied daily and weekly based on the phases of the moon, and varied seasonally and semi-annually.[15] While conducting experiments on corn seeds, Burr

was able to show that the highest voltage seeds grew more rapidly and produced more yield than those seeds with low voltage measurements, which grew slowly and could be described as weak. This tells us that by measuring a corn seed's electrodynamic field or L-field, one could predict its future potential to grow!

Similar to how a building contractor organizes materials, supplies, and manpower prior to attempting to erect a structure, the body often shows field fluctuations prior to physical events. During ovulation in women, field measurements showed marked variations 24 to 48 hours before the egg was released and showed a large spike in the L-field when the egg was released. This finding was true with rabbits, monkeys, and rats as well.

Burr's research also showed that the external environment affects all living things. He believed that the human race is like a school of fish swimming in an ocean of electromagnetic currents, of which we are ignorant as to where these currents are located and how they affect us.[16]

We are surrounded by unseen magnetic fields that affect our own individual L-fields. Burr states:

> L-fields are links in a "chain of authority." This starts with the simplest forms, runs upward through all life on this planet to the most complex form we know—man—and then extends outwards into space and upwards to an infinite, ultimate authority, about which one can only speculate.[17]

In his experiments with trees, Burr took continuous readings on elm, oak, and maple trees in New England for one year with the intention to record the effects of universal (cosmic) forces on living systems. Burr noticed daily variations in the readings for the trees, as well as seasonal changes. The most remarkable finding occurred between September 10th and September 14th. During the yearlong experiment, the areas where the trees were located (New Haven and Lyme, Connecticut) experienced a significant hurricane. What was remarkable was the readings from the two trees, which showed extremely high plus polarity field variations. The hurricane occurred on September 14, 1944. However, let's look at the days preceding the hurricane. On September 10th, variations shifted from an average maximum of −50 mv at 6 a.m. to 169 mv at noon, which is a fluctuation of 219 mv in six hours. The voltages gradually decreased back

to zero. However, on September 11th, they rose again in less than six hours to 263 mv at noon. The readings again decreased to zero by 4 a.m. on September 12th to rise again to a whopping 318 mv by noon. These highs, plus potential increases, occurred again on September 13th and 14th and exceeded any other readings recorded for September. The hurricane struck on the evening of the 14th. According to psychiatrist and researcher Leonard Ravitz:

> If these extraordinary potential shifts had been recorded in only one tree, little could have been made of them. But parallel changes occurred at the same time in both an old and a young tree forty miles apart. This suggested a causal relationship between the electric conditions of the troposphere, the hurricane, and the fields of living systems.... These violent fluctuations started on September 10, four days before the actual hurricane. This suggests that living systems are sensitive to electromagnetic field changes which precede terrestrial phenomena.[18]

Burr also demonstrated field intensities and polarities in relation to seasons and lunar phases.[19] There have been numerous recent correlational studies in regards to weather, lunar phases, and other cosmic forces affecting human behaviors. The most notable correlation is that people are "crazier" during nights that have full moons. This assumption is widely accepted in clinical healthcare settings, especially among emergency room staff. An Internet search will pull up numerous studies looking at the interaction between lunar phases and psychiatric admissions, arrests, and violent actions. Many of these studies review psychiatric admissions on nights in which a full moon occurs. The studies indicate that the number of admissions is not significantly different on full moon nights than any other night. This then leads to the conclusion that it is not the general population that is crazy, but rather healthcare professionals are imagining things.

Skeptics flock to these types of correlational studies to discount any possible behavioral changes associated with lunar phases. Anyone who has worked in an emergency room or psychiatric unit understands that this type of correlational study will not yield accurate results. I've worked in emergency rooms for more than six years and the events that lead to psychiatric admissions are rarely related specifically to "craziness." Many

psychiatric admissions are the result of manipulation, drug/alcohol abuse (substance-induced psychosis), lack of drugs or alcohol (withdrawal), housing issues, noncompliance with psychotropic medications, relationship break-ups, arguments with family/friends, and malingering. There are too many variables to accurately gauge if psychiatric admissions are correlated with lunar phases. I had one gentleman feign psychiatric symptoms in the ER because he liked the hospital food as well as "looking at the hot nurses." You know what, looking back on it now, maybe he was "crazy." I mean, have you ever tasted hospital food?

The main part of the L-field research which pertains to the paranormal has to do with how our emotional states affect the readings in our internal L-field. If humans have an L-field which gives us information on physical happenings in our body, could these L-fields also give us insight into our emotional status?

It turns out that emotional states do affect the voltage gradients in the electrodynamic or L-field. Burr was able to measure the intensity of emotions (both active emotions and emotions from past memories).[20]

There is no doubt that we all have feelings and emotions. Emotions are often linked with sadness, grief, or worry; however, the emotion or feeling that is often exhibited by even the toughest of men is anger. Emotions and feelings are universal and cause physical changes to us. Sadness leads to crying; worry leads to uneasiness or butterflies in the stomach; anger causes us to get flushed or tense up; and fear evokes all kinds of internal physiological changes (fight or flight). There is also a wealth of information indicating that anxiety, stress, and depression can exacerbate medical conditions. So, do these emotions exhibit measurable internal energy? According to Ravitz, "Emotions can be equated with measurable energy."[21] Ravitz further states, "Emotional states or conditions affect the voltage gradients in the human electrodynamic field and it is possible to measure these changing states simply and objectively."[22] Because we are each individuals and, much like our personalities are unique, so is our L-field. This means there is no specific number (such as +70 mv) that might mean one is depressed, anxious, or fearful.

In more recent studies into emotions and EEG results not related to Burr's L-field, it was reported that trauma-based negative emotions do have

measurable abnormal energetic effects showing that people in emotional distress display different voltage patterns than baseline.[23]

L-Fields and Emotions

Let's look at some examples of L-field measurements related to human emotions. Readings were taken of a woman in her 40s who was admitted to the hospital for a hemorrhaging peptic ulcer. It was noted that she had a severe and lifelong phobia of birds. Her baseline L-field readings, though exhibiting physical symptoms (ulcer) and some depression, where usually high minus patterns (−20 mv).[24] One afternoon, her readings were −20 mv at 5:05 p.m. and then −21 mv at 5:10 p.m. The researchers then brought a parakeet into the room and her L-field shot to zero, then to +50 mv, and then to +71 mv. The subject obviously was fearful and scared. She eventually ran out of the room. The sudden polarity shift in her L-field could have recorded a typical pattern for fear. They recorded her for the next couple days with −17 mv and then a +3 mv. They noted that her field measurements suddenly accelerated, reaching +20 mv in under a minute and then accelerated even more to +60 mv. When asked about her emotions, the woman stated that she had "spontaneous thoughts" of the parakeet.

The next day, her reading again shifted toward high minus polarity −82 mv, reporting pain related to an ulcer which, again, was baseline. Suddenly, her reading accelerated to +38 mv, her face became flushed, and she reported an illusion similar to a shadow which she thought was the parakeet. Her readings jumped to +120 mv. When looking at the shifts of this woman, Ravitz notes that emotional reactions (belief that the parakeet was in the room) and external stimuli (parakeet actually present) show similar field readings.[25]

What we see here are huge polarity shifts not unlike the EMF shifts noted in previous research in labs and reportedly haunted locations. As noted earlier, my guess is that each individual's readings are as unique as their personality; however, in this woman's case, we can see that depression is related to high minus polarity and fear associated with high positive polarity.

Based on this example, we can see the intense internal bioenergetic polarity shifts associated with experiences simply related to fear. What

about grief? While under hypnosis, a patient was asked to recall a period in his life in which he had suffered severe grief. This led to a rise and instability of his L-field which lasted for several minutes. What could you expect the polarity shifts to look like in a catastrophic emotional crisis or life-threatening situation? I am uncertain as to whether any research or readings have been taken during an emotional or life-threatening crisis. My guess is the shifts would be extremely intense, more so than the high readings associated with fear, grief, and the tree readings during a hurricane.

In summary, what we have is more research pointing out the bioenergetic changes that are the result of emotions. What is also important is that these bioenergetic changes are more intense with significant fluctuations during emotional crises such as trauma or life-threatening situations.

What does this type of internal energy shift do to a person? Could this intense dramatic internal bioenergetic fluctuation, related to a significant emotional or life-threatening crisis, be associated with or trigger a paranormal experience? I believe that the internal energy fields of an individual who is in significant emotional crisis (such as facing their own death or the potential death of another) are the second step necessary for a paranormal experience. I view a significant emotional or life-threatening crisis as a psychological injury that is very similar to a bodily injury. For example, if we slam our hand in a car door or break our leg, the injury reverberates throughout our body and brain. The same is true with a psychological injury.

Burr's L-field is often dismissed by mainstream medicine. The main problem is nobody bothered to determine if the measurements Burr and his colleagues made were valid (measuring what it is purported to measure). It appears as if most scientists simply ignored Burr. I reached out to a well-known skeptic who had written a recent article dismissing Burr's work, stating that it failed to be replicated and therefore was not reliable. Upon asking for the references or links to evidence for lack of replication, the person responded, "I can't recall, but I'm sure they are out there." I searched websites for academic papers, using Google and Bing search engines, and I have not come across any experiments which attempted to replicate Burr's work. My assumption is that this skeptic "assumed" Burr's work was false or unable to be replicated based on their own belief system.

Biological Control System and Psychological Wounds

Dr. Robert Becker has done extensive research on the importance of electricity and magnetism on living things. In his books *The Body Electric* and *Cross Currents*, he describes how our bodies and brains generate electromagnetic fields within us and around us. Becker attempted to repeat Burr's voltage measurements using contemporary, updated equipment, and found more complex patterns.[26] While determining voltage measurements on a salamander, they found, instead of Burr's simple head (−) and tail (+), there existed a complex field that followed the arrangement of the salamander's nervous system. Becker tested other species including earthworms, flatworms, fish, amphibians, reptiles, mammals, and human beings. In each species, the electromagnetic patterns and potentials on the skin reflected the arrangement of the nervous system. In humans, the head and spinal region, with its vast number of neurons, was positively correlated. In all species, readings grew increasingly negative as Becker moved away from nerve collections and toward the extremities (hands, feet, tail).[27] Although Becker was not attempting to replicate Burr's work, as he was focused on his own research, the important thing to consider is not the polarity, but again the acute or sudden electrical current changes that occur internally in humans and animals.

Becker's work with biological electrical currents in humans and animals is extensive and shows the role that our internal electric currents play in healing, growth, regeneration, and even consciousness. Let's look at more of Becker's work to further illustrate the role that electrical fields play in living organisms.

In one experiment, a reference electrode was placed near the spinal cord of a frog and salamander and the measuring electrode on the stump of limb which had been recently amputated. Prior to amputating the limb, baseline readings showed a positive charge at the spinal cord and negative charge of −10 millivolts at each extremity, which shows a flow of electrons from the head and spinal cord out to the trunk as discussed previously. Once the limbs were severed, the readings from the stumps of both the frog and salamander reversed immediately to positive, indicating an injury. The next day, the readings remained positive (+20 millivolts) in both the frog and salamander. What occurred next was interesting as the frog's readings slowly crept back to the negative baseline of −10 millivolts in roughly 25

days; the salamander's readings shot up from the +20 millivolts to more than −30 millivolts in less than 10 days and then returned to their baseline negative readings of −10 millivolts. What this showed was vast differences in electrical properties of the two animals, which explained perhaps why the salamander was able to regenerate its amputated extremity.[28] (For those who might have forgotten, salamanders are complete bad asses! They are similar to Swamp Thing from the comic books or the cheesy 1980s movie, in that if you cut off one of their limbs, it will grow back.)

Becker's work discusses numerous ways that electrical currents applied to injuries could speed up, slow down, or inhibit the healing process. Becker was able to regrow—to some extent—extremities in mammals that normally do not have regenerative properties, simply through precise application of specific electrical currents. Other experiments in bioelectricity showed that a flatworm's polarity could be controlled by passing an electrical current through it. When an electrical current was fed in the appropriate direction through a section in the worm, normal polarity disappeared and a head formed at each end. As current was increased, the section's polarity reversed; a head regrew at the rear, a tail at the front. At higher voltages, even intact worms would completely reorganize, with the head becoming a tail and vice versa.[29] This provides evidence that the worm's electrical field is also its organizing field or L-field.

Consciousness can also be altered through electrical currents and polarity shifts. For example, while under deep anesthesia, negative potentials at the extremities weakened or vanished and often reversed, with extremities becoming positive and the brain and spine negative. Using magnetic fields to reverse polarity can anesthetize animals just as well as chemicals.

Important information from this chapter includes the extensive research which indicates that, as humans, we experience much bioelectrical shifting every day. As noted previously, the change in our bodies' electrical current can result in healing or growth. From any type of wound a current of injury is produced, which initiates the process of healing on a cellular level. Could this current of injury also occur on a psychological or emotional level? Just as the current of injury stimulates healing and regeneration in salamanders, could a current of psychological injury stimulate healing of psychic trauma?

Psychological injury (emotional crisis related to a life-threatening situation) is just as significant as a physical injury in our bodies. Just like a physical injury, a psychological injury evokes biological electrical currents. Could an acute emotional crisis or trauma lead to internal bioelectrical shifts, with the purpose of healing or easing our emotional pain? According to Becker, every reaction and thought seems to produce an evoked potential or polarity shift as our direct current (DC) system is involved in every phase of mental activity. The variations in the flow from one area to another form every decision, interpretation, feeling, and thought, whether conscious or not.

Becker's theory of biological control or DC systems is based on concepts from physics, electronics, and biology. Becker theorizes:

> The first living organisms, whatever their nature, must have been capable of self-repair; otherwise, life would not have succeeded.... Self-repair requires a closed-loop control system—that is, one in which a certain signal indicates injury and causes another signal to effect repair.... As the repair proceeds, the injury signal diminishes, and when the repair is complete the signal stops. Such a system does not require consciousness or intelligence, so it may be simple in nature but indistinguishable from life itself.[30]

Earlier, I mentioned the term "biological control system" or "DC system," which Becker compares to our home's heating and cooling system. Our home's temperature is essentially determined by our thermostat which is powered by a battery. A sensor monitors the room temperature and controls the heating or cooling system with the purpose of keeping the house at a constant temperature. When the sensor notices a change such as a decrease/increase in temperature, it sends an electrical signal to the system to act or heat/cool the home. Becker states that there are minute electrical currents in organisms that appear to be control signals which start and regulate growth and healing.

> In general, a biological system could have mechanisms for sensing an event (for example, an injury), and then transmitting this information to the central processing unit (the brain). In the brain, an automatic "decision" would be made to initiate repair of the wound, and a

> stimulating or "correcting" signal would then be transmitted from the brain to the site of the injury. As repair took place, the injury signal would be diminished, causing the stimulating signal to also diminish. System activity would cease when the repair was completed. This is a simple negative-feedback control-system loop. I postulated that such systems in living organisms would very likely be electrical in nature.[31]

Summary

Let's go back to the case example in Chapter 4, which involved the soldier in Vietnam and his mother in America.

The son's imminent death due to a gunshot wound to the chest and head trauma caused intense emotional reactions. As we learned from this chapter, intense emotions exhibit measurable energy and reverberate throughout our entire body, affecting every molecule, leading to intense bioelectrical fluctuations. In this case, the son's emotion sent "electrical waves" throughout his body, creating electrical reactions in the body, which gave rise to a field of electricity that extends throughout and around us. The information carried in this emotional electromagnetic field is important in the transfer and eventual experience of ghostly phenomena (severe head pain, sensations of choking and blood running down her face, feelings of fear/sadness, and hearing her son's voice) by his mother in America.

It is apparent that all living things are capable of generating an electromagnetic field. What is also apparent from the research presented in this chapter is that there is a bioelectrical charge created by emotions, which, in turn, adds information to our existing human electrical field. This emotional electrical field, much like all other electrical fields, is not contained in our bodies and therefore can extend outward indefinitely into the atmosphere.

We have discussed the first two processes in my formula that are necessary to a ghostly experience, including experiencing an emotional crisis reaction, which triggers internal energy fluctuations, which adds information to our existing electrical field.

I believe that these two processes (psychological aspects and changes in internal energy or bioenergetics) can lead to or trigger an innate human

ability to acquire or communicate information using the Earth's atmosphere in an attempt to repair/ease psychological injury or alert another to a distressing event (injury, apparent death). The possible mechanisms for acquiring information from the external environment are discussed in the next chapter. Other questions that will be answered include:

- Can living things sense electromagnetic fields and other external fields in the atmosphere?
- If so, what information can we obtain from these external electromagnetic fields? If people can detect electromagnetic fields from other living things, are we able to affect others through the same linked fields?

6
EXTERNAL INFORMATION ACQUISITION

Our minds are entangled or connected with the minds of others and, more or less, can synchronize at great distances with the help of our Earth's atmospheric properties. The third and final part of the equation necessary for a ghostly experience is acquiring specific information from the environment that is constantly surrounding us. This chapter will highlight research into the role that the external environment plays in paranormal experiences.

During my undergraduate and graduate studies, the only mention of theories that are outside of the mainstream conventional psychology was Carl Jung's collective unconscious. The topics discussed in this chapter have different labels than Jung's: global consciousness, collective unconscious, morphic resonance, and universal entanglement. However, similar to Jung's work, *the general idea is that humans have the ability to share and gather information with each other through our thoughts and minds*.

The notion that consciousness is "everywhere" and not just a subjective experience based on firing neurons in our brain is not new. In fact, the belief of universal or collective consciousness is prominent in ancient philosophies such as Buddhism. Consciousness is the state or quality of awareness. It has been defined as: sentience, awareness, subjectivity, the ability to experience or to feel, wakefulness, having a sense of selfhood, and the executive control system of the mind.[1] The unconscious is the part of the mind that is inaccessible to the conscious mind, but affects behavior and emotions.

Mainstream science mostly ignores the notion that consciousness exists outside of the brain, but there are emerging thoughts in neuroscience suggesting that consciousness is an intrinsic property of everything, similar to gravity. This chapter will highlight many different viewpoints, and the purpose is not to endorse any one viewpoint as "better" or "true," but that the process of acquiring information from the environment is not new, strange, or New Agey hoo-ha.

Collective Unconscious

Carl Jung's ideas were my first introduction to the idea that consciousness or unconsciousness could be shared and was not simply my own individual experience from birth to death. Jung proposed that there are parts of the unconscious mind that are common to all humans. He believed that these areas consisted of a collection of experiences of our entire human species from its beginning. According to Jung:

> The collective unconscious is a part of the psyche which can be negatively distinguished from a personal unconscious by the fact that it does not, like the latter, owe its existence to personal experience and consequently is not a personal acquisition. While the personal unconscious is made up essentially of contents which have at one time been conscious but which have disappeared from consciousness through having been forgotten or repressed, the contents of the collective unconscious have never been in consciousness, and therefore have never been individually acquired, but owe their existence exclusively to heredity.[2]

Jung believed the collective unconscious was formed by instincts and archetypes. Instincts are inherited behaviors performed without prior experience (that is, in the absence of learning), and express innate biological factors. Sea turtles, newly hatched on a beach, will automatically move toward the ocean. A kangaroo climbs into its mother's pouch upon being born. Honeybees communicate by dancing in the direction of a food source without formal instruction. Other examples include animal fighting, animal courtship behavior, internal escape functions, and the building of nests.[3]

There is a PBS documentary entitled *My Life as a Turkey* which follows a man who raised and parented 16 wild turkeys from the moment they were hatched. The turkeys imprinted to him, and during the documentary, he discussed what he had to teach the turkeys as well as what they already instinctually knew. He reported that the turkeys didn't need to be taught which insects were dangerous or edible, as they somehow already knew how to distinguish them. He also noticed that the turkeys instinctually knew which snakes were poisonous or harmless. He believed that the turkeys knew the basic blueprint of other animals (friendly vs. unfriendly) and food (edible vs. poisonous). However, they needed guidance on the lay of the land (where to find water, places to avoid) and that moving vehicles are dangerous.

Archetypes are symbols, images, and themes common to people of all cultures, races, and ages. They have been passed down since the beginning of our species. Archetypes show themselves in myths, stories, art, literature, and dreams in which humans of all cultures review and process similar themes. These archetypes are universally shared among the entire species including the Aborigines of the Australian outback, farmers in Ohio, politicians in Germany, and geishas in Japan. A common archetype is the "shadow," which represents the dark side of our psyche. This dark side includes weakness and chaos, and is represented by snakes, demons, dragons, and the devil in dreams, stories, and myths. Common archetypal figures include the wise old man, the trickster, the hero, devil, and god, which are found in stories or tales through all cultures.

The collective unconscious is a good starting point to counter the idea that our minds are born as a blank slate, with only our upbringing to blame for our psychological development. The collective unconscious theory contends that we, as humans, all share or have access to a blueprint for our psyche which has been developing since the beginning of our species.

Morphogenetic Fields

Robert Sheldrake is a biologist and author who proposes that memory is inherent in nature and that the brain is more of a tuning system than a memory storage system.[4] Sheldrake's collective memory hypothesis expands upon Jung's collective unconscious, stating that *we don't just*

inherit primitive instincts and archetypes from our ancient ancestors, but we continue to inherit, as well as share, memories, experiences, and information from those currently around us. According to Sheldrake:

> Memory need not be stored in material traces inside brains, which are more like TV receivers than video recorders, tuning into influences from the past.... Thus each individual inherits a collective memory from past members of the species, and also contributes to the collective memory.[5]

Sheldrake's "morphic fields" are fields within and around an organism which organize its structure and patterns of activity.[6] There are many types of morphic fields, including morphogenetic, behavioral, social, cultural, and mental fields. All of these fields have a specific task in guiding an organism. Sheldrake states:

> Morphic fields include morphogenetic fields (coming into being of form) involved in the development of animals and plants, shaping the forms in which they grow. Behavioral fields organize the behavior of animals by patterning the activities of the nerve cells within their brains. Social fields link together the members of social groups and help to coordinate their activities in such a way that the society acts like a single organism, as in ant colonies, flocks of birds, schools of fish, or packs of wolves.[7]

How are memories inherited? Sheldrake contends that our morphic fields contain a kind of memory which evolves through time.[8] Information is passed from previous members of a species to current members through morphic resonance. Morphic resonance is basically inherited memory, which occurs through space and time, and supplies information from the past. The greater the similarity (such as in family bonds), the greater the influence of morphic resonance.

What is resonance? You've probably heard people use the term "resonate" when speaking about something that they enjoyed: "That movie really resonates with me," or "I don't know what it is about that song, but it resonates with me." The term "resonate" is used to mean that the movie or

song had a strong connection with them or that they were in tune or on the same vibration or mental wave length with something.

Resonance, in scientific terms, is when one object vibrating at the same natural frequency of a second object forces that second object into vibrational motion. Everything in nature has a distinct frequency. If you drop a ruler or pencil on the floor, it will begin to vibrate. If you pluck a guitar string, it will begin to vibrate. If you blow over the top of a pop bottle, the air inside will vibrate. When each of these objects vibrates, they tend to vibrate at a particular frequency or a set of frequencies.

The frequency or frequencies at which an object tends to vibrate is known as the *natural* or *resonant frequency* of the object. For example, if you place a tuning fork next to a guitar string and the tuning fork matches the natural frequency of that string, the string will pick up the vibrations and move without anyone touching the string.

There are many types of resonance, such as electrical resonance, mechanical resonance, and acoustic resonance. An example of resonance is provided by a motor that causes vibration in a piece of furniture in another part of the same house. These vibrations occur because the furniture has a natural frequency equal to the frequency of the vibrations set up by the motor. The furniture is said to be in resonance with the motor. If you listen to your radio in the car, you are utilizing resonance. When you tune your radio receiver (scan or change stations), you are changing the resonant frequency of the circuitry so that one particular station comes in clearer, thereby matching frequencies.

The matching of frequencies through morphic resonance could explain how information is passed only to certain species and not others, as all species have a distinct natural/resonant frequency. Unlike other forms of resonance, morphic resonance is not a transfer of *energy* form one system to another, but rather a transfer of *information*.[9] Sheldrake contends that all organisms undergo rhythmic oscillations, vibrations, electrical activity, movements, and cycles from the smallest atoms throughout the body and brain. These constant oscillations help us tune into the fields of the species.

The existence of morphic fields and morphic resonance indicate that our minds are not confined to our brains; rather, they involve fields that extend beyond our brains and bodies, linking organisms to their environment and to each other.

The morphic fields of perception, behavior, and mental function are rooted in brain activity, but are far more extensive than the brain that resides within our skull. The process is similar to a cell phone as its transmissions are rooted in the electrical activity in its circuits and electronic components, yet it emits and receives radio waves that travel in fields far beyond the phone and often to great distances.[10]

This ability to emit and receive frequencies and signals at great distances allows humans and lower animals to obtain information from the environment and the fields that surround us. Sheldrake gives numerous examples of experiments that indicate that many memories could be inherited. In one experiment, mice were trained to complete a task. The first generation averaged 300 trials to learn, the 2nd generation averaged 100 trials, the 3rd generation 30 trials, and the 4th generation 10 trials. Why are subsequent generations learning more quickly? Is it genetic? Other experiments showed that even mice not descended from parents that were trained learned more quickly. This shows the possibility of a collective memory of the species. Once something has been taught or learned the first time, the field or that idea becomes available to others of the species. So if you train dogs in Idaho to learn a new skill, then dogs all over the world should be able to learn that skill more quickly than the original dogs in Idaho would have.

If morphic fields and morphic resonance exist, and we have the ability to "tune into" these fields, this could lead to information exchange and give credence to phenomena such as telepathy, remote viewing, and ESP. Have you ever been thinking about a person and then received a text or phone call from them? Have you ever called someone and they told you "That's weird! I was just getting ready to call you"? Have you ever had a strong feeling as if someone needed you or someone you love was in distress?

Apparitions and ghostly encounters account for only a small portion of what can be called paranormal phenomena. Paranormal and psi phenomena contain a wide range of unexplained communication, which has similarities to ghostly experiences. Telepathy is essentially communication at a distance. As noted in Chapter 4, one definition of telepathy is "the communication of impressions of any kind from one mind to another, independently of recognized channels of the senses." What is often not discussed is that there are many cases of telepathy which are visual, as well as other cases which involve hearing sounds and sudden overwhelming

feelings of fear, concern, or alarm. These types of telepathic experiences are very similar to ghostly experiences and could easily be misperceived as a ghost, spirit, or apparition. Telepathic experiences can overlap with apparitions as telepathic influences can come to consciousness in the form of dreams, visual images, sounds, bodily sensations, emotions, intuitions, or urges to act with no specific reason.[11] Think about commonly reported haunt-type phenomena, such as feeling cold (bodily sensation), a sudden rush of fear or sadness (emotions), shadows or ghosts (visual images), and voices (sounds).

The most frequently reported cases of telepathy involve death, distress, accidents, or emergencies, all of which invoke strong emotional reactions. Telepathic occurrences are most often reported in connection with one person, who is in distress, communicating to another (usually a family member). These telepathic responses to the distress of family members make sense as they could be important to survival.[12]

From what we know about morphic fields and morphic resonance, it makes sense that individuals who are linked through familial or social bonds are more likely to experience telepathic communication. According to Sheldrake, any change in one of the organisms linked through a field affects all others who are linked.[13] These connections enable people and animals to react to distant communication regarding distress or death of a group member with whom they are bonded. Sheldrake has written many books as well as conducted experiments on telepathic communication involving humans and animals. He has compiled a database in which he notes reactions of animals to a distressful event taking place far away or the death of humans to whom the animal was bonded. He has accumulated 106 accounts of dogs reacting to the death of a distant person to whom they were attached. The database also includes humans reacting to the death or distress of animals with which they had emotionally bonded.

Universal Entanglement

Entanglement or non-locality describes the ability of objects to instantaneously know about each other's state, even when separated by extreme distances. The notion of non-locality was assumed to only occur in quantum processes or at a very infinitesimally small, subatomic level.

Recent research suggests that the process of entanglement may occur on a larger scale. For example, if two human brains were similar to two separate Tesla coils, then stimulation of one brain by the appropriate electromagnetic stimuli should evoke electromagnetic patterns within the other brain at a significant distance.[14] Research has shown that the stimulation of one of a pair of siblings with complex magnetic fields around the temporal lobe produced changes in the right temporal lobe of the other sibling in another room.[15] This temporal lobe change or reaction indicates a coherence or communication between the two siblings' brains even though they are separated at a distance.

The human species and all of its seven billion brains are immersed in a shared medium which is the Earth's magnetic field. Along with being immersed in this shared magnetic field, Persinger contends that the Earth's magnetic field contains enough energy to store the experiences of every human being who has ever lived: "The Earth's magnetic field has sufficient capacity to represent or 'store' the information within the energy that has been associated with the action potentials that have been generated by every human brain that has existed on the planet."[16] He is saying that, in theory, we have access to information from every brain—present and past. This, of course, has huge implications and goes against everything we are taught in formal education. We must now readjust our thinking to consider that Abraham Lincoln's or Albert Einstein's or Adolph Hitler's memories and thoughts are "floating around" somewhere in the universe. This sounds like science fiction.

So how can one test this hypothesis? Well, if a person had a special ability to access information from this field, then this would be a good place to start.

Persinger and others have conducted several experiments with self-proclaimed psychic Sean Harribance. Mr. Harribance has been tested and assessed by multiple researchers during the past 50 years and has shown remarkable accuracy in tests regarding identifying stimuli hidden in envelopes, as well as diagnosing health issues and distinctive information of people in close proximity to him.[17]

If certain people have the ability to gather information from or connect to this universal consciousness, what makes them different from the general population?

Real-time measurements of brain activity with these "special people" while they are actively engaged in obtaining non-local information has yielded some answers. For instance, in experiments with Mr. Harribance, where he was shown pictures of individuals he'd never met, and was then asked to describe information about these individuals that he could not have known, the scientists found correlations between the accuracy of his statements and certain types of brain activity. In other words, when he was accurate in gathering "non-local" information, certain conditions were present. The mental state when he obtained his "readings" or "images"—called the "Harribance Configuration"—required some mental preparation from Mr. Harribance. Electroencephalographs (EEGs) measure electrical activity produced in the brain. What was discovered was that Mr. Harribance showed peaks in EEG activity over his right frontal and temporal regions.[18]

A more interesting discovery was that the magnetic field (MF) around Mr. Harribance's head decreased, as photo emissions increased while he was in his "information gathering state." During this time, Harribance was distorting the magnetic field around him. This led researchers to speculate that "the concurrence of photo emissions from his right hemisphere during cognitive images creates the condition for excess correlation, entanglement, and non-locality."[19]

Our human body emits visible light which are called biophotons or photo emissions (remember, light is a form of electromagnetic radiation). The light that the body gives off is so weak that it is not detectable by the human eye. Because we can't see these photo emissions, a machine called a photomultiplier is often used to determine the amount of light, photo emissions, or biophotons that we emit at any given time. What was so remarkable with Mr. Harribance was that while he we were obtaining his "readings," the photo emissions over his right hemisphere were 10 times greater than those of the average person.

According to Persinger, Mr. Harribance was more reliable the physically closer he was to the subject he was reading.[20] Additional experiments showed that while sitting with a subject that Mr. Harribance was reading, both the subject's and Mr. Harribance's EEGs became similar or resonated and, ultimately, when both the subject's and Harribance's EEGs synchronized, this is when the "readings" took place.[21]

In working with Mr. Harribance, as well as other participants, Persinger and his colleagues had a rough idea of a magnetic field pattern that could be used to increase the likelihood of entanglement or communication at a distance. Persinger notes several experiments in which "normal" subjects who were separated (placed in different rooms) and then exposed to the same specific configuration of complex rotating magnetic fields "become one" or synchronized and exhibited non-local information gathering abilities.

In a separate experiment, there were two participants who were both exposed to the same rotating magnetic fields around each of their heads. When person A was stimulated with light flashes, person B (who was located in another pitch-black room) showed a response in their right hemisphere and an increase in photon flux density (light).[22] How could this occur if person B was in a dark room with no stimuli? It seems that these similar rotating magnetic fields which were applied to both participants, in some way, synchronized their brains.

Experimenters separated participants by 3,728 miles and attempted to see if they could achieve entanglement.[23, 24] According to their results, it worked; resonance and synchronicity were attained. This might seem ridiculous; however, as a society we have figured out how to communicate instantly across great distances (for example, cell phones). With the advent of cellular communication, we are essentially connected to people all over the world, every moment of the day. I can use my laptop computer to join an Internet forum and chat with people thousands of miles away while sitting in a corn field in Ohio. So the idea of instant communication, or telepathy, is entirely considerable.

How Does Communication Occur at a Distance?

The mode of communication that is suspected in the previous experiments is the same as other popular forms of communication that involve electromagnetic fields and the Earth's atmosphere. Radio waves, which are a form of electromagnetic radiation with a certain wavelength and frequency, are best known for their use in communication. Radio waves enable transmission for TV, cell phones, and of course, radio. They also have the ability to travel around the world. The reason radio waves can

travel great distances is because the Earth's atmosphere is surrounded by an electronically conductive layer called the ionosphere.[25] When radio waves are bounced off the ionosphere, they have the ability to travel across oceans. The ionosphere is important because it solves the problem of radio waves being blocked by solid objects.[26]

In 1927, a person in New York could speak with someone in London via telephone; however, the connection was poor, with constant static and electrical interference. Although communication was taking place, it took many years to refine this type of communication. Perhaps this is the case with entanglement, and to some degree with telepathy or ESP, in that, though communication is possibly occurring, it needs research and refinement to reach the point where it's possible to exclude all the static and interference and send and receive clear, coherent messages.

During entanglement "connections" or "synchronizations" in the previously mentioned experiments, enhanced brain activity over the right hemisphere was also noted in the 7 Hz frequency. This frequency is the same frequency which the entire Earth generates and is called the Schumann resonance.

We noted earlier in the chapter that everything has its own frequency which is called its resonant frequency. So, is this true for the Earth itself? Yes, and the Earth's resonant frequency is called the Schumann resonance. The Schumann resonances are an accepted fact in the scientific community. The ionosphere surrounding our planet is positively charged, and the Earth's surface is negatively charged. This causes electrical tension, which is discharged with thunderstorms and lightning. Every second there are 1,000 lightning storms world-wide, creating electromagnetic waves which spread throughout the ionosphere.

The Schumann resonances are generated by these constant worldwide lightning discharges. The Schumann resonances are constant electromagnetic waves that exist in the atmosphere and are the Earth's background or resonant frequency, influencing biological processes in humans and animals.

The Schumann resonances are always around us and, though their frequencies can vary with solar cycles, geomagnetic storms, and radiation from the sun, the Earth's baseline or fundamental resonant frequency is, interestingly, the same as the human brain's resonant frequency: 7.83 Hz.

Moreover, the Schumann resonances are in tune or calibrated with our brain's frequencies.

Thus, the Earth's frequency may be very important to our evolution as human beings, to our health, our survival, and our overall well-being.

Research has demonstrated a direct link between humans and their connection with the Schumann frequency. In one study, volunteers lived in a bunker for four weeks which screened out the Schumann frequency. Throughout the four weeks, the volunteers' circadian rhythms changed and they suffered emotional distress and migraine headaches. When the Schumann frequency was added back into the bunker, the volunteers' health stabilized, showing a direct link between humans and their connection with the Schumann frequency or what has been called the pulse of the Earth.[27]

Research has shown congruence between Mr. Harribance's right hemisphere pattern during non-local information access or "readings" and the Earth's Schumann resonance. This could imply that "there is some proportion of information concerning every person on the planet represented within a source strongly correlated with the Schumann Resonances that permeate the earth-ionosphere wave guide."[28] Perhaps certain people can access and interact with this information that is present in the Earth's atmosphere. If we have access to the thoughts, events, and emotions of every human present and past essentially surrounding us, then communication at a distance, or telepathy, doesn't seem that far-fetched.

Interconnected Minds

Are all living things connected? The Global Coherence Initiative (GCI) is a nonprofit research organization made up of scientists across the world and has provided some compelling evidence of a "global information field that connects all living systems and contributes to a type of global consciousness."[29] GCI utilizes state-of-the-art sensing technology located throughout the world to observe changes in the Earth's magnetic field. These sensors are constantly monitoring the resonant frequencies in the Earth's magnetic field.

Another research organization called the Global Consciousness Project, which originated at Princeton, believes that "our individual minds, though distinct and uniquely ours, may also join with others in a kind of mental

symphony that now and then becomes audible against a prevailing background of static."[30] The Global Consciousness Project has a global network of random number generators (RNGs). Each RNG outputs a continuous stream of completely unpredictable zeroes and ones. The stream ordinarily averages out at 50 percent ones and 50 percent zeros, just as flipping coins tends to produce roughly equal heads and tails through time. When events engage millions of minds and hearts at once (for example, the terrorist attack on 9/11), structure seems to emerge out of what would otherwise be randomness. The global network departs a bit from the normal generation of random ones and zeros. The RNGs' behaviors become slightly correlated and the system as a whole appears to shift toward coherence.[31] During global events, when billions of humans are focused on one event, unexpected correlations in RNG indicates "that there is an interconnection of consciousness at deeply hidden levels between people and among people across the globe."[32]

Research conducted by GCI shows that our human electromagnetic field can be detected by nearby animals or even us humans. There is experimental evidence that human bioemotional energy can have a subtle but significant (scientifically measurable) non-local effect on people, events, and organic matter.[33] It is becoming clear that a bioelectromagnetic field, such as the ones radiated by each human heart and brain, can affect other individuals and the "global information field environment." GCI has also shown that a person's emotional state is encoded in our bioenergetic field, which is communicated throughout the body and into the external environment.[34] Their research suggests that emotional information is actually coded and modulated into our bioelectrical fields. Therefore, by shifting our emotions, we are changing the information coded into the magnetic fields that we radiate which can affect those around us.

We are suggesting in essence that this encoded information is communicated non-locally between people at a subconscious level, in effect linking all living systems. If we look at the heart, for example, it emits electromagnetic fields which change according to our emotions, and these can actually be measured up to several feet away from the human body. These fields have been shown to affect not only ourselves, but those around us. One of the main hypotheses of GCI is that the Earth's magnetic field is a

carrier of biologically relevant information that connects all living systems.[35]

To recap, we produce electricity in our bodies. This electricity creates magnetic fields and these magnetic fields extend outside our bodies into the atmosphere. Once in the atmosphere, these magnetic fields, in theory, could extend great distances. Let's say that these magnetic fields extend into the environment carrying all kinds of great information. The next questions would be:

- Can living organisms detect and gather information from the Earth's magnetic field?
- Do we have a magnetic sense?

Human Magnetic Sense

The question that is debated is not whether these magnetic fields exist and surround us, but rather at what strength do they interact or affect us? Research involving transcranial magnetic stimulation (TMS) in a laboratory setting has shown consistent findings regarding the effects of high frequency, high intensity EMFs on humans.[36] TMS is a noninvasive method of exciting neurons in the brain through direct application of magnetic fields over desired areas of the brain. TMS has several uses in neuropsychology and is often reported to be "an essential weapon in the neuropsychologist's contemporary armory."[37] TMS has proven that it can be used "to establish the necessity of a brain region for cognitive processes."[38]

On the other hand, research involving MF effects on humans in the real-world environment has been inconsistent. [39] But there is evidence that low-frequency, low-intensity electric and magnetic fields that are common in the environment are associated with various metabolic, behavioral, and pathological effects.[40] When it comes to the effects of environmental MFs, the key question to ask is whether magnetic fields, which are smaller in magnitude than those applied during TMS, are actually detected by human subjects?

Although there are several explanations for the inconsistencies regarding MF detection in the environment, the most common and global explanation

is the "use of inapplicable methods of analysis."[41] Previous studies of EMF-induced effects on brain activity used linear methods and were unable to reliably detect nonlinear stimulus response patterns. Recent research regarding the effects of MFs has been conducted utilizing nonlinear methods and has provided evidence suggesting that both humans and animals can detect low strength MFs.[42,43,44,45,46] These results provide evidence that MFs commonly found in the environment have the capacity to alter EEG activity. The results of the studies are highly generalizable, as the field strength and frequency used in these studies are commonly found in both general and workplace environments. The response rate for these experiments was 100 percent in all but one study, which means that there was an effect of the MF in almost all of the subjects.[47,48,49,50] The results of the previous research into MFs suggest that "the ability to detect low-strength, low-frequency MFs is a common property of the human nervous system."[51]

Evidence suggests that the detection of weak magnetic fields is a form of sensory transduction, similar to how our senses function. Sensory transduction plays an indispensable role as it is the mechanism by which external physical cues are transformed into internal biochemical or electrical signals that can be put to further use.[52] External cues carry an array of information about the environment, and internal cues present to the individual a distilled version of that information.[53]

Sensory modalities encompass more than the five senses, as living beings not only sense sound, light, chemicals, and pressure, but also position, heat, gravity, and electric and magnetic fields.[54] There is much evidence that suggests animals, fish, insects, and a host of other organisms are able to directly detect low-intensity magnetic fields from the Earth, which they use to navigate. Although evidence suggests certain animals such as migrating geese and sea turtles have this magnetic sense, until recently, nobody was able to pinpoint how they did it. Researchers recently discovered a sensor of the Earth's magnetic field in the brain of a tiny worm. According to researchers at the University of Texas, "The sensor, found in worms called C. elegans, is a microscopic structure at the end of a neuron that other animals probably share, given similarities in brain structure across species. The sensor looks like a nano-scale TV antenna, and the worms use it to navigate underground."[55]

Evidence indicating that detection of weak MFs is a form of sensory transduction points to the idea that humans possess a "magnetic sense" and that this ability falls below the level of consciousness. If an individual's magnetic sense is similar to the other senses, then there is good reason to believe that its sensitivity will vary among individuals and by gender. Again, we fall into this idea that certain people are more sensitive to environmental stimuli than the general population.

Summary

The research discussed in this section suggests that minds are entangled or connected with the minds of others and, more or less, can synchronize at great distances with the help of our Earth's atmospheric properties. With this synchronization, information may be transported and shared. The type of information passed or communicated may come in the forms of visual images, feelings, hunches, visions, or dreams. Radio communication systems rely on the resonance phenomena. When we "tune" a radio receiver, we are changing the frequency at which our radio's internal circuits resonate (essentially matching their frequency); therefore, we receive only the signal or "radio station" we want.[56] Psi phenomena—more specifically, ESP or telepathy—is often viewed as a "biological radio." It has been hypothesized that the "sender" is transmitting an electromagnetic signal that is "sensed" by the "receiver" which suggests a resonance phenomenon.[57]

Past theories on ESP stated that this phenomenon required three components: a transmitter, a signal that spans great distances, and a receiver. Another important component is that the people or brains are tuned to the same frequency or synchronized (that is, applying same rotating magnetic fields).[58]

In this chapter, we have discussed Jung's collective unconscious, entanglement, non-locality, and Sheldrake's morphic fields/resonance. The point of reviewing these topics is not to say one is better or a scientific fact, but to consider that the environment that surrounds us may transport more information than we are aware of. My goal was to communicate that our surrounding atmosphere may provide a reliable way to access and exchange information among humans. The ability to tap into the surrounding

environmental information and to communicate distress to others at great distances could aid in our survival, well-being, and advancement. This notion may not be that far-fetched and, according to the evidence presented in this chapter, it is fairly common.

Let's go back to our case example from Chapter 4 which involved the soldier in Vietnam and his mother in America. To sum things up, the son had a life-threatening event or trauma (gunshot to the chest and severe head trauma), which led to intense emotions, causing bioenergetic or polarity shifts in the electrical activity of his body. These shifts were so intense that they set in motion an unconscious mechanism to warn his mother, with whom he is bonded or linked, of his distress. This communication occurred by transmitting the modulated electrical data through the son's internal electrical activity and his electromagnetic field into the atmosphere. Remember, we all have electromagnetic fields which are constantly in contact with the Earth's atmosphere. Once in the atmosphere, this modulated electrical data essentially bounced around until it synchronized or resonated (much like a radio signal) matching frequencies with his mother in another country. Once this occurred, the data in the electrical signal was unconsciously interpreted by the mother in the form of ghostly phenomena: feeling as if blood was pouring down her head, choking on blood, hearing her son telling her he loved her, feeling weak, and overwhelming sadness and fear of dying.

This chapter shed more light on how we as humans are electrical beings, who not only generate a magnetic field, but may possess a magnetic sense, capable of detecting environmental changes. This magnetic sense most likely is similar to our other senses in that it varies with each individual.

To this point, we have discussed the main steps to a paranormal experience, which include experiencing emotions related to a crisis or life-threatening event. This crisis triggers internal bioenergetic fluctuations which affect our human electrical field, tuning our biological antennas so we can emit or access external information in the atmosphere to communicate distress, alert others of trauma, or to ease our psychological injury. The next chapter will further elaborate on the steps necessary to experience an apparition or paranormal phenomena using case examples.

7
GHOSTLY INGREDIENTS THEORY

Air is all around us and is constantly used. Breathing is an essential and unconscious event. However, when we are choking or having a panic attack, we are considerably more conscious of our breathing and the importance of air for our survival. Perhaps when we are in crisis mode, we become more aware of unconscious processes that help us survive, cope with trauma, or to alert another while we are in distress.

Similar to the air we breathe, radio and TV waves constantly surround us. However, until we use an antenna, we cannot connect with these waves. In order to access these radio waves, we must turn on our "biological radios." So how do we raise and adjust our "biological antenna"? I believe it is turned on or "tuned in" during a crisis or trauma to serve a specific function, such as alerting a close friend or family member of our distress or healing a psychological injury. Accessing external information, or the collective conscious that exists around us, could help the mind work through the crisis, calm emotions, restore homeostasis, issue a distress call to others, or perhaps even say goodbye to a loved one.

I have used the terms "biological radio" and "biological antennae" to illustrate that our bodies, with the help of the atmosphere, can act as wireless communication vessels. The idea that our bodies can use EMFs or radio waves from the environment, which contain modulated electromagnetic data, and somehow transfer these modulated electrical signals throughout our bodies, then convert it to data, information, or messages sounds like science fiction or New Age thought. But due to recent advancements in technology, many engineers are extremely interested in using the human body as a signal transmission medium. Intra-body

communication (IBC) is communication between devices in which the human body is used as the signal transmission medium. There are different methods for IBC; however, they all basically use the human body as a medium to transfer a modulated electronic signal, which contains information and data. It has been discovered that the human body performs this function well.

One method for IBC uses near-field electrostatic coupling in which information is transmitted by modulating electric fields and electrostatically coupling currents into the body.[1] In near-field radio IBC, the human body is treated as a waveguide as electromagnetic radio signals are transmitted through the human body from transmitter to a receiver.[2] Although the signals are largely contained by the skin, they can extend outward to the environment. IBC has a great deal to offer the medical field, as well as the marketing and advertising fields. A user could transfer information between electronic devices simply by just touching them. Users with an IBC enabled watch with stored e-cash could buy an item by touching its tag. Emergency room physicians could be able to access an unconscious patient's medical history by simply touching them.[3] The idea that the human body can obtain and use the electromagnetic fields or information that are around us is not science fiction, but rather reality.

A sudden change in one's life such as an unexpected death of one's child or spouse, being trapped in a sinking car, or being physically assaulted, creates an explosive release of emotions that can overwhelm the individual. These intense emotions can affect every cell and reverberate throughout the body, resulting in internal energy or bioenergetic shifts, and altering our human electrical field, which extends outside of our bodies into the atmosphere.

In a scenario regarding the unexpected death of a child, the mother's unconscious processes may seek to alleviate the psychological trauma. Because normal coping skills are ineffective (imagine trying to drain a lake using a small pail), we use all conscious and unconscious processes to neutralize this emotional crisis. If the ability to gain information through the collective unconscious exists, this ability would be well used to alleviate the enormous grief. Perhaps a familiar smell related to the deceased child, a visual image of the deceased child smiling and playing, or hearing the child's voice saying "I'm fine, Mommy" could comfort the mother. This is

a survival skill to speed up the emotional healing and return the individual to baseline functioning. If one does not process a trauma, they carry the emotional symptoms of the trauma which can affect their health, their relationships, and their overall well-being indefinitely.

The equation presented earlier in the book is listed again here.

Psychological Aspects

(Overwhelming emotions related to life-threatening event, crisis events, distress, intense desire.)

+

Changes in Internal Energy or Bioenergetics

(The above emotional states trigger fluctuations in internal bioenergetics, altering our human electrical field.)

+

External Information Acquisition

(Changes in internal bioenergetics alter our human electrical fields, which extend outside our bodies, linking or tuning our biological antennae to external fields in the atmosphere which permeate everywhere and interconnect all things.)

=

Ghostly Experience

(Acquiring or sending information from these essentially hidden external fields lead to experiences, paranormal in nature, however needed in some way to ease, cope, communicate distress, or resolve an emotional crisis such as finding a lost dog, saying goodbye to a family member, or gaining comfort from seeing a deceased loved one.)

We have discussed the details of all the aspects of this equation in the previous chapters. I will now present cases of apparitions and related paranormal phenomena in relation to my theory.

To clarify an earlier statement, the term “ghost” will not be used, as it implies survival after death, whereas “apparition” is defined more as a ghost-like image. Apparitions are, of course, visual, but there are other common experiences often reported as evidence of ghosts in literature, on television, and among paranormal enthusiasts, to which I refer as “haunt-type phenomena” or “ghostly experiences.” These include the sense of a

presence, auditory phenomena, dizziness/headache, objects moving, overwhelming feelings/emotions, unexplainable weakness of body parts, muscle pain, overwhelming fatigue, skin irritation, tactile phenomena, unusual lights/energy, change in temperature, tingling/burning sensation, nausea, and unexplained pressure.

Let us review some examples. The cases that we start with are called spontaneous cases, which means that they are one-time occurrences of ghostly phenomena among individuals who do not claim to have psychic abilities. In the parapsychological literature, spontaneous cases of paranormal phenomena are more widespread than reports of hauntings. We are going to start with these spontaneous cases to become familiar with my concepts, and then we will move into my thoughts on hauntings or recurrent apparitions.

Girl's Night Out

Jon was sitting in his living room waiting for his wife, Emily, to come home from a "girls night out" with some of her friends. "I had gotten a text message from Emily stating they were leaving the restaurant and would be home in 20 minutes. An hour and a half had gone by with no word from Emily. I began to get extremely worried; however, I tried to remain calm. In an effort to distract myself, I went to my office and began to surf the Internet. After a few minutes, I was absorbed in setting up my lineup for my fantasy football team which played the next day.

"Suddenly, I got chills throughout my body to the point where I noticed goose bumps. My heart was pounding and I felt another presence was in the room. Filled with fear, I noticed on my right-hand side and slightly behind me a figure. I was too scared to turn my head, fearing that I was not prepared for what I would see. Summoning up the courage, I turned my head ever so slowly. I noticed a cloudy and transparent version of my wife. She was wearing the same clothes that she had left the house in earlier; however, they appeared disheveled and dirty. Her expression was flat, her eyes were shut, she had blood running down her head, and her right arm appeared distorted. I rose from my chair and screamed 'Emily!' At that moment, the apparition had disappeared."

It turns out that Emily (the wife) was not dead; an accident occurred at the same time as the appearance of the apparition. Emily had gotten into a car accident, causing head trauma and a broken right arm. Looking closely at this report, it is obvious that the visual image was an apparition and not a ghost, as Emily had not died, but rather had seriously injured herself. The report itself has many similarities to other reports of apparitions, such as a sense of a presence, a visual image, the image being transparent or smoke-like, and the image vanishing without cause.

Another similarity was that the percipient (witness of the apparition) was in a relaxed or absorbed state, surfing the Internet, similar to meditation or dreaming, both of which have been found to correlate with increased psi phenomena. Would this biological message or telepathic communication of distress have been received if the percipient was not in a relaxed, absorbed mental state, but rather at a noisy party? Most likely not.

In this report, the agent (person who is sending the biological message or telepathic impression), Emily, had a trauma or unexpected life-threatening injury, which set in motion the apparition experienced by her husband. Emotion is the beginning of the process and is the metaphorical switch that turns on the machine. Radios or cell phones would not work unless the power is turned on, and emotion is what turns on or initiates the process of an apparitional or paranormal experience.

Emotion causes the intense bioelectrical polarity shifts (as mentioned in previous chapters) and initiates our biological transmitter. In other words, emotions trigger or send an electrical message throughout our bodies, altering our electrical fields, which transmits information to the environment through our electromagnetic field. There needs to be a catalyst to set processes in motion, and as mentioned in the chapter on internal energy shifts, intense emotions caused by life-threatening events or trauma lead to significant electrical activity and polarity shifts in our bodies due to a psychological trauma or injury. In this case example, the life-threatening event or trauma would be the injury sustained by Emily. Imagine that you sustain a perceived life-threatening injury; what would you feel or think? You most probably would experience extreme fear, sadness, regret, anger, powerlessness, and a myriad of other volatile emotions. You would be flooded with thoughts such as, “I don’t want to die,” “I will never see my loved ones again,” “There is still more that I want to do,” and “Please God, don’t let me die!” The psychological and physical changes that occur during

this catastrophic moment would be intense, exhausting, and unlike anything we have encountered thus far in our lives. Facing inevitable death is beyond words to describe. This event makes an imprint on our electromagnetic field, which extends outside our bodies and into the Earth's atmosphere, awaiting someone to pick up this information through resonance or synchronization.

A life-threatening trauma leads to overwhelming emotional shifts, which lead to intense bioenergetic polarity shifts, which trigger an innate human ability to communicate distress to those with whom we are emotionally linked. In this case study, the telepathic communication occurred via a visual image.

Based on the evidence presented in previous chapters, we will assume that humans are capable of producing an electromagnetic field which extends beyond our bodies and minds into the atmosphere. This field, which contains our memories and experiences, is not confined to our brains, but it links our brains to the environment and to each other. We are immersed in a medium shared by all living things (the Earth's magnetic field), which as suggested by Persinger, contains enough energy to store the experiences of every human being. Sheldrake's concept of a collective conscious and its interactions with morphic fields and morphic resonance, as discussed in previous chapters, indicates that humans are similar to cell phones, as its transmissions are rooted in the electrical activity of the phone's circuits and electrical components, yet it emits and receives radio waves that travel far away from the phone itself.

As humans, our telepathic communication system is interpreted (unconsciously) in the electrical mechanisms of our brain, yet much like a phone, we can send or receive frequencies from far away. This means that our consciousness is not sealed off or separate from others. If our memories, experiences, and overall consciousness are not confined to our bodies and brains, and they exist in a shared medium in the environment with properties similar to a collective conscious, then the notion of telepathy is not far-fetched. So how does the telepathic or biological message from Emily reach Jon specifically? How does this message of distress know where to go and who is receptive to it?

Sheldrake contends that individuals are linked through familial or social fields, and any change in one of the organisms linked through a field affects all those who are linked. Research into entanglement and non-locality

suggests that brains are entangled, frequency-locked, and more or less can synchronize at great distances with the help of the Earth's atmospheric properties, specifically the Schumann frequency.

It has been proven that electrical energy can be propagated around the world between the surface of the Earth and the ionosphere at extremely low frequencies in the Schumann cavity. The Schumann cavity surrounds the Earth and reaches from the ground upward of 50 miles.[4] Nikola Tesla reported that it took 0.8484 seconds for a pulse emitted from his laboratory to propagate to the opposite side of the planet and return.[5] Remember the study in which brains of people who were 3,000 miles apart were synchronized? When synchronization occurs, information in the form of a visual image, a familiar voice, an emotion, or a certain smell can be transmitted.

The idea of telepathy being a "biological radio" is not new. The troubling question has always been, what mechanism is tuning our biological radio? For instance, when we tune a radio, we are changing frequencies (moving through the channels) at which our radio's internal circuits resonate until we match the frequency of our chosen radio station. Resonance, which is essentially matching frequencies, must play a role, as having the transmitter (Emily) and the receiver (Jon) being frequency-locked (same channel) would be necessary for a transfer of information to occur.

Sheldrake's morphic resonance may explain how information is passed to certain species, as each species (whether humans, birds, rats) may have their own resonant frequency, and within each species there exists social/familial fields which, again, have their own resonant frequency. In the research regarding entanglement, there was a specific configuration of complex rotating magnetic fields, which when applied to both individuals, caused synchronization at great distances allowing information to be passed.

To sum things up, Emily had a life-threatening event or trauma, which led to intense emotions, causing bioenergetic or polarity shifts in the electrical activity of her body. These shifts were so intense that they set in motion an unconscious mechanism to warn her husband, with whom she is bonded or linked, of her distress. This communication occurred by transmitting the modulated electrical data through Emily's internal

electrical activity and her electromagnetic field into the atmosphere. Remember, we all have electromagnetic fields which are constantly in contact with the Earth's atmosphere. Once in the atmosphere, this modulated electrical data essentially bounced around until it synchronized or resonated (much like a radio signal), matching frequencies with her husband Jon. Once this occurred, the data in the electrical signal was unconsciously interpreted by Jon in the form of an apparition of Emily in distress (bloodied).

Husband's Cry for Help

The husband of a woman in Colorado was in Denver Veteran's Hospital, very ill with pneumonia. To complicate the situation, he was allergic to many drugs and his wife was worried about him. She left him at the end of the visiting hours for the added strain of notifying relatives about his condition and caring for their small son. She knew that his condition remained grave, although his physicians thought that he was improving. Completely exhausted, she fell asleep about 10:30 p.m.

About 2 a.m., she found herself sitting upright in bed. She was looking at her husband standing in the doorway of the room, but he could not possibly be there. As she stated in reporting the occurrence, "I felt like a complete fool, but I couldn't get back to sleep so I called the hospital. Sheepishly, I told the floor nurse what happened, so she graciously said to wait while she checked up on him."

Minutes, then half an hour went by, when all she could her was the sound of running feet, wheeling carts, etc. But finally the nurse came to the phone out of breath, but happy. It seemed that when she went to check, the patient was experiencing a crisis. He was choking. The half hour delay had been while the nurse notified two doctors and another nurse. It took the efforts of all four to relieve the choking incident and keep the woman's husband alive. The nurse said if the wife had not called, by the time the intern made the next round of checking, it would have been too late.[6]

This is another case of an apparition being seen while a loved one (husband) is currently in a life-threatening crisis. Other similarities are that the percipient (wife) could be described as being in a meditative or calm state (sleep), which, again, could make the apparition or biological

communication from the husband more likely to occur. In this case, the wife, at some level, knew that the apparition was a signal of great importance, as she called the hospital to check on her husband. The husband must have been experiencing a rush of emotions and internal biological shifts during this life-threatening choking episode and, in essence, issued a distress call into the environment, which somehow resonated or matched frequencies with his wife in a different location. The type of message and communication was crude, but in this scenario, effective. As previously mentioned, early efforts with telephone communication were crude and the voices hard to decipher until the process became more refined.

Burning Hands

"My daughter was away at college, and I started to write her as usual. When I had about finished, my right hand started to burn so intensely I couldn't hold the pen; the pain was terrific. Less than an hour later we received a telephone call from the college telling us our daughter's right hand had been severely burned in the laboratory with acid at the same time I was feeling the burning in my own right hand."[7]

This case has no reports of apparitions, auditory phenomena, or other "sexy" haunt-type phenomena. What makes this case interesting is that the mother experienced a psychosomatic pain sensation directly related to her daughter's accident. There are several cases in literature involving the transmission of physical symptoms and even illnesses. I recall a mother reporting a severe headache and an apparition of her son lying in a river. She later discovered he fell, struck his head, and drowned in a river. What is fascinating in the above case example is that the distress signal is received by the percipient (mother) and somehow through unconscious processes; this biological or telepathic message is then translated into physical symptoms (pain in hand). Let's consider that someplace in the mother's internal cognitive processes, this external message of distress was received by her brain, interpreted, and exhibited in the same pain the daughter was experiencing. Can you imagine the tremendous coordination and great amount of cognitive and bodily processes and transmissions that occurred in this situation?

You may be thinking people burn themselves, break or strain a joint, stub their toes, and hit their hands with hammers all the time; why aren't there more reports of transmission of these experiences to others? I suspect that many other variables lined up for this specific telepathic communication to occur. For instance, in this case the mother was thinking about the daughter and focusing on her through writing a letter when the accident occurred. This could have increased the likelihood of resonance or synchronization. We also do not have much information on how the daughter reacted to the acid burn either, as she could have felt that it was a life-threatening situation and exhibited overwhelming emotions, thereby initiating paranormal processes. Also, the interconnectedness between mother and daughter, in this case, is mostly likely strong.

Airman Brother

"My brother," she says, "appeared to me on the 19th March, 1917. At the time I was either sewing or talking to my baby. The baby was on the bed. I had a very strong feeling that I must turn around; on doing so, I saw my brother, Eldred W. Boywer-Bower. Thinking he was alive and had been deployed to India, I was simply delighted to see him, and turned around quickly to put the baby on a safe place on the bed, so that I could go on talking to my brother; I turned again and put my hand out to him, when I found he was not there. I thought that he was joking with me, so I called him and looked everywhere I could think. It was only when I could not find him I became very frightened and considered the awful fear that he might be dead. I felt very sick and giddy.... Two weeks later, I saw in the paper that he was missing. Yet I could not bring myself to believe that he had passed away."

The percipient's half-brother (she refers to him as brother), an airman, had been shot down in France on the 19th March, 1917, early in the morning.[8]

This case could indicate a ghost or survival after death. I would argue that viewpoint as we are not aware of the specifics of when this young pilot died. As we have seen in the other cases, apparitions can occur while an individual is still alive. I would venture to say most apparitions, olfactory, auditory, and other haunt-type phenomena, occur while the agent is still

alive. This, of course, is excluding experiences reported at allegedly haunted locations (we will discuss this in Chapter 8).

In this case, the sister could have witnessed the apparition as a sign of distress from her brother. Perhaps her brother was still alive, but facing a life-threatening experience (for example, engine explosion due to enemy fire). Again, the emotional shifts related to his looming death could have initiated the process of telepathic communication. Does the agent—the brother—intend to send a distress call or telepathic message to his sister? This is hard to know for sure, but my guess is that he did not intend to send an apparition of himself to his sister. At some point during his emotional crisis, thoughts about his family and specifically his sister and nephew more than likely crossed his mind. Perhaps he wished or had an intense desire to see his nephew or say goodbye to his sister and, due to the bioenergetic factors being favorable and the signal being sent through the Schumann cavity, his desire occurred as a crude apparition to his sister.

Ex-Husband's Goodbye

"I was lying wide awake in my bed for hours. I could not fall asleep and could not understand why. I was very anxious and felt as if something was not right. Without warning, a soft glowing light appeared next to my bed. The light gradually morphed into the form of a man whom I recognized instantly as my ex-husband. He did not say anything and appeared to be just staring at me. What was bizarre was that I wasn't scared and had little reaction aside from being curious. The next day I got a call from my son (my ex-husband's child) stating my ex had died the night before unexpectedly. His death occurred around the same time I saw his image in my room. I think he wanted to say goodbye one last time."

This case illustrates the points I have made regarding telepathic apparitions, as a man who was experiencing intense emotional shifts related to the process of dying sent a biological message to his ex-wife whom he felt linked with. In this case, the woman witnessed a soft glowing light, which preceded the apparition. Lights are another commonly reported haunt-type phenomena.

Cousin Jerry

Tori had just settled into bed and was looking forward to a good night's sleep. She had just closed her eyes when she noticed a bright flash of light. She sat up in her bed and scanned the room; however, everything was back to blackness. She heard footsteps and smelled gasoline. She was then overwhelmed by a bright light, followed by an image of her older cousin Jerry almost glowing while floating in front of her bed. She stated, "He was as clear as if he was standing in front of me on a bright sunny day." Tori reported she even noticed the glare from his glasses. Jerry stared back at Tori, gave her the thumbs up signal, and then disappeared. The next morning, Tori had gotten a call from her mother stating her cousin Jerry died last night in an accident while working on his car.

In this case, the percipient or witness experienced auditory phenomena in the form of "footsteps" and olfactory phenomena of "gasoline." She also had an extremely vivid and specific image of her cousin, even noticing the glare from his glasses. Paranormal researcher Louisa Rhine notes in her collection of spontaneous cases that reported auditory phenomena ranged over a variety of mechanical sounds such as knocks, raps, footsteps, and even gun shots.[9] These auditory phenomena are also often reported in cases of ghosts. Again, like so many cases of apparitions, we have a percipient with an emotional or familial connection with the agent. We also have the agent (cousin Jerry) experiencing distress or a life-threatening situation, which presumably causes an emotional turmoil. We don't know what the cousin's thoughts, emotions, or circumstances were prior to his death; however, we can place ourselves in that situation to get some sort of notion. These are the events that set in motion the entanglement, resonance, or communication at a distance through magnetic fields in the Schumann cavity.

Daddy's Girl

"My father had passed away quietly in the hospital around 3 p.m. that day. We had a very special relationship, and I definitely considered myself a 'daddy's girl.' His passing was a shock to the whole family. Overwhelmed with sadness, worry, and fear, I laid down on the couch as soon as I got home that evening. It must have been around 8 p.m. when my encounter occurred. I know that I was not asleep. While lying on the couch, an

overwhelming sense of comfort overcame me. As I sat up, I saw an image of my father. I wasn't scared, just shocked. He walked toward me and whispered 'Don't be sad.' He then rubbed my shoulders, which is what he would do to ease my sadness when I was a teenager. The encounter made me smile even though it only lasted seconds and then he slowly faded away."

In this case example, we have definitive proof that the father is deceased and that the ghostly encounter reported occurred after the father had passed away. This is a spontaneous case as the phenomena occurred only once. This case shows the use of ghostly phenomena to ease or cope with a psychological injury (death of the father). In this case, the agent would be the daughter, as her emotions related to the crisis of her father's death are the starting point of the phenomena.

The ingredients for a paranormal experience are the same as the previous cases. For example, the daughter begins to have overwhelming emotions related to the emotional crisis or trauma of losing someone very important to her. She is struggling with never seeing her father again. She may be consumed with regrets, guilt, and sadness. These emotions trigger bioenergetic shifts in her body. The body's electrical storm signifies a psychological injury and sets in motion a plan to heal this psychological wound through whatever means possible. Being unable to cope through normal means, the body uses unconventional means.

As mentioned before, if collective consciousness exists, the memories, personalities, and experiences of all humans are stored in the atmosphere's electromagnetic field. Therefore, if the daughter taps into this field, she may be able to unconsciously resonate with her deceased father's electromagnetic traces through a shared memory, visual image, or smell. In this case, the daughter had an apparition of her father as well as experiences of tactile phenomena of rubbing her shoulders and auditory phenomena of her father telling her "Don't be sad." The gesture of rubbing her shoulders must have psychological significance to her, which is why this particular phenomenon was brought to consciousness. She reports ease or comfort from this paranormal experience, which was able to start the process of healing her psychological wound.

The term "bereavement or grief hallucination" is often given to experiences like these by mainstream science. I don't particularly like categorizing these experiences as hallucinations, as it insinuates mental

illness or mental instability. These phenomena, I believe, are paranormal in nature and should instead be referred to as bereavement or grief "apparitions." Encounters such as this case example occur frequently. In a recent study, researchers found that up to 80 percent of elderly people experience hallucinations associated with their dead spouse one month after their death.[10]

Perhaps bereavement apparitions or visits from the deceased shortly after death are important to our individual psyches. Perhaps apparitions are a way to process emotions and ensure the psychological well-being of the survivor. A final communication to say goodbye to the deceased is important, so perhaps apparitions are a natural function of the psyche moving through the stages of a crisis. In other words, in cases where the survivor is not able to accept or process the death, our unconscious mind attempts to display these mental images in the form of apparitions, to advance us through recovery and acceptance. Often, individuals report feeling more at ease or accepting of the loved one's death after seeing the bereavement apparition.

Bob "The Dog"

I am a huge animal lover and my dog Lacy is an extremely important part of my life. She is considered in almost all decisions that I make, from planning my day, vacations, and the time I wake up in the morning. I bring this up because I believe that humans can share a strong emotional link to animals, especially their pets.

In order for paranormal phenomena to occur, a strong emotional link between the percipient and the agent must be present. Usually this link is familial; however, there are cases when the link involved is through marriage or friendship. *Does this emotional link also occur between humans and animals?* As I mentioned in earlier chapters, Sheldrake has compiled a database of the phenomena between humans and animals. Let's take a look at a sad case example, which gives us insight into the bond between a human and a dog:

> On the night of Saturday, July 9, I went to bed about 12:30, and experienced a nightmare. I was awakened by my wife's voice calling

> to me. As I awoke, the nightmare, which had been long and vivid, faded from my brain. All I could remember of it was a sense of awful oppression and of desperate and terrified struggle for life such as the act of drowning in water would probably involve.... I dreamed that my black retriever dog, a most amiable and intelligent beast named Bob, which was the property of my eldest daughter, was lying on its side among brushwood, or rough growth of some sort, by water.... In my vision, the dog was trying to speak with me in words, and, failing at this, transmitted to my mind in an undefined fashion the knowledge that it was dying. Then everything vanished and I awoke to hear my wife asking me why I was making those horrible and weird noises. I replied that I had dreamed that old Bob was in a dreadful way, and was trying to talk to me and tell me about it.[11]

There is also an account from the percipient's wife:

> On the night of July 9th I was awakened by most distressing sounds proceeding from my husband, resembling the moans of an animal with no distinct words. After listening for a few moments, I woke him up, whereupon he said that he had a nightmare, in which he was engaged in some struggle connected with our retriever dog "Bob" and that Bob was trying to speak, to talk to him and explain that he wanted help.[12]

Unfortunately, the dog was later found dead and floating in a river. Based on the veterinarian's and nearby railway workers' reports, it was concluded that the dog had been struck by a train on the bridge, and fell into the water, where it later drowned. The dog's time of death was suspected to have occurred about the time of the percipient's dream.

It is truly uncanny that the percipient would have had such a detailed dream about the dog's current emotional crisis and even its location. The percipient dreamed the dog was lying on its side in water. Another interesting aspect of this case was that the percipient believed the dog was trying to talk or communicate with him; failing in that attempt, the dog was able to transmit to him telepathically its current life-threatening state. Even more remarkable is that the wife heard the husband making distressing sounds, specifically animal-like moans, which prompted her to wake him

up. Was there some sort of telepathic communication occurring before the wife's eyes? Why was the husband making animal-like noises right at the time he was dreaming about communicating with his dying dog a great distance away?

It is very clear that some sort of telepathic communication occurred between human and animal. This leads us to consider how the internal bioelectrical fluctuations, emotional electrical fields, and communication through magnetic fields in the Earth's atmosphere (discussed earlier relative to humans) can and do occur for animals as well. It would seem that the process is very similar, in that the animal has an emotional crisis or life-threatening occurrence, causing internal energy fluctuations, which alters their electrical fields, which extend outward into the environment, resonating with the human they are emotionally linked to. This process led to communication through synchronization and resulted in visual images of the dog struggling for life, feelings of oppression, and a call of distress or help.

When I began writing this book, I hesitated to include case examples of paranormal phenomena between humans and animals. I thought that it was too "messy" and that animals could not be as "sophisticated" as humans relative to internal bioenergetic shifts, entanglement, universal consciousness, and emotional crisis. However, my current thinking fully accepts animals as transmitters of paranormal phenomena. Perhaps animals as transmitters of paranormal phenomena are even more "reliable" than humans in that they do not filter their perceptions with intellectual doubt.

Neighborhood Cat

I have never had a paranormal experience or seen an apparition or ghost. But I had an event occur, which I continue to struggle to explain and understand. I share here a spontaneous case example that occurred to me, along with some of my impressions.

It was a typical summer day in Ohio. My wife was traveling in California, which left me home with my dog, Lacy, a bloodhound. My wife had been away for four days and she wasn't scheduled to return for another three days. My wife travels for work several days at a time, a few times out of the year, so this wasn't a big change for me or the dog. We were used to

it, and went about our routines. Lacy is fairly laid back in the mornings. We have a routine where I wake up, take her outside to relieve herself, feed her, take a shower, and then prepare for work. This has been our schedule for five years. Typically, after she eats, she will take a nap or watch me go about my routine. After my shower, I eat a light meal and watch the news while Lacy naps. Before leaving for work, I take her outside one more time. This has been the routine for several years.

However, this particular day Lacy was anxious and restless. She was unusually vocal and nudged me to wake up. She had never been vocal in the morning, and typically on work days, I'm up before she is. I let her out and she wandered around the yard as if looking for something. She eventually came back in, didn't eat, and seemingly remained distressed. I went on with my usual morning routine; however, I had unsettled feelings and impressions, as if something wasn't quite right. It's a mix of adrenaline, indecisiveness, and fear.

I ignored these feelings and went about my routine trying to rationalize. I then began to think to myself that "Maybe I'm getting a telepathic impression." Because my dog and I were now both restless, I thought about who has the strongest emotional ties to both of us? Immediately I thought of my wife. I felt powerless as she was across the country. I gave into the feeling of being drawn outside and broke my morning pattern. I opened the back door and Lacy and I went on the porch. Once again, she began to sniff and wander, appearing to be looking for something. Those who are familiar with breeds of hound dogs know that they smell before they think or act; it's their nature. Lacy was frantically seeking to identify a smell. It was at that moment that I noticed a white object floating in my half-acre pond near the woods. I hesitated and remained motionless on the porch thinking, "Is that a fish? Is that a tree branch?" I began walking, then running, and the closer I got I realized that it was the roving neighborhood stray cat. I retrieved the animal out of the pond; however, I was too late. The cat appeared to have drowned in the pond in an unfortunate accident. I could tell that she had died recently as the body was not cold or stiff. The dog immediately calmed and upon returning inside the house went to sleep on the couch as I prepared to drive to work. The unsettling and restless feelings and impressions had disappeared for me, and I'm assuming they disappeared for Lacy as well.

I struggled to understand this unsettling occurrence for several days. I felt extremely guilty, thinking that my inattention allowed that cat to die. I was a zombie at work, just staring and reviewing the events in my head. My internal struggle was horrible, but couldn't this have just been a coincidence? If telepathic communication does occur in times of distress, why would Lacy and I get the message from the cat? We weren't linked with that cat in any way. So I did what my education and clinical training had taught me to do: dismiss it as a coincidence and not discuss it with anyone.

About a week later, I was sitting on the porch and a family of deer was eating grass by the woods. This prompted me to realize that since moving to our home five years ago, I had witnessed four generations of this deer family. I had spent almost every day observing the fawns, their mothers, and maybe their grandmothers. They knew me and I knew them. This led me to realize that my relationship with the neighborhood roving stray cat was similar as with the deer. I had seen it every day. The cat would often hang out in our backyard and our paths crossed on numerous occasions. We would stare at each other and, though I never got close enough to pet or cuddle it, there was an understanding that we shared space and were not threats to each other. Lacy had more interactions with the cat as she would chase it, but never attacked it. The cat would walk by the window, often teasing with Lacy as she barked. We encountered that cat every day for five years. We did have a bond or link and, thus, when its life was threatened and in crisis, the cat attempted to communicate its distress to us.

If I would have read a case example like this five years ago, I would have assumed that the person was "misremembering" the event, or was simply embellishing the facts. But because this is my account, I know and stand by what occurred.

Summary

Spontaneous cases are a great way to get a glimpse into the phenomena of apparitions. Spontaneous cases involve one-time occurrences of paranormal phenomena, which, for those researching the paranormal, can provide a wealth of information. In my opinion, there are fewer variables in these types of cases, which make identifying the processes involved less

complicated. The idea that telepathy, ESP, or communication at a distance is a possible cause for apparitions and haunt-type phenomena has been discussed since the publication of *Phantasms of the Living* in the late 1800s. Other books such as Louisa Rhine's *The Invisible Picture*, Ian Stevenson's *Telepathic Impressions*, and George Tyrrell's *Apparitions* are wonderful reads, which go into extensive detail on the connection between telepathy and apparitions. Although the connection between these two paranormal phenomena has existed, the exact mechanism for how these connections between individuals at great distances occur has been vague. Early psychical researchers knew that these phenomena occurred; however, they had difficulty explaining "how" they occurred.

> That we are linked to each other in hidden ways that are, at least sometimes, powerfully influential has been the contention of mystics of all ages and places. It was also hinted at or explicitly stated as a conviction by several pioneers in psychical research... To believe in some universal binding that joins us all is not, of course, to deny that for most of us this union is never manifested consciously. But even if we can observe it occasionally between persons united by love and during special crisis to one of them, this should arouse our curiosity and our efforts to find out why this is so—why the union is latent for most of us and why it does sometimes reach expression in a few of us.[13]

I have presented a hypothesis on the processes involved in apparitional and ghost-type experiences, which states that processes necessary for a ghostly experience include experiencing emotions related to a crisis or life-threatening event. This crisis triggers internal bioenergetic fluctuations, which affect our human electrical field, tuning our biological antennas so we can emit or access external information in the atmosphere to communicate distress, alert others of trauma, or to ease our psychological injury. I provided an equation showing the roles that these processes play in creating a paranormal experience.

My hypothesis will not cover all types of apparitions such as recurrent apparitions, which haunt a certain location and have been witnessed by several individuals through time. Haunted houses, prisons, hospitals, and restaurants, often visited during popular ghost-hunting shows such as *Ghost*

Adventures, are examples of hauntings. In such cases, they are typically looking for "ghosts," which are believed to have no connection to the current witnesses and who have been deceased for many years.

In the spontaneous case examples presented in this chapter, reports of hauntings were intentionally omitted. I believe that hauntings present a different explanation than spontaneous cases of apparitions, as hauntings tend to be more location-oriented. As I mentioned earlier, there are some people who have a higher probability of experiencing an apparition or paranormal phenomena.

In the case of hauntings or recurrent apparitions, we have to ask ourselves:

- What is different?
- Why at this location?
- Why are some people witnessing apparitions and others not?

8
NEW PERSPECTIVES ON HAUNTED LOCATIONS

"That first night at the Ft. Magruder Inn in Williamsburg, Virginia, I woke up with the feeling you get when someone is standing behind you. Uneasily I rolled over, only to be confronted by a ghastly sight: a young Civil War soldier standing by the bed, staring at me. He was very young—no more than 15 or 16—and wore light-colored, brownish-grey clothing. Half of his face had been shot away.... I could hardly bear to look at him. He was so utterly miserable. 'Go away, please,' I pleaded with him. 'Go to the light, please. Just go to the light.' He returned for two more nights, never saying anything, never moving from that rigid corpse-like position."[1]

This ghostly encounter is typical of a haunting or recurrent/residual apparition. Up to this point, we have learned about my theory on apparitions or ghostly experiences that occur in the context of life-threatening events, emotional crises, or psychological injury. I also discussed spontaneous case examples, which highlighted my theory. But typical hauntings or residual apparitions such as this example have not been discussed. Apparitions of inhabitants long since deceased, with whom the witness has no emotional or familial link require additional exploration, which is the focus of this chapter.

When investigating an allegedly haunted location, instead of searching or "hunting" for an external source (ghost, spirit) hiding someplace, instead ask, "What makes this location or these witnesses special?" If the research discussed in the previous chapters is valid and reliable, and the environment around us contains information from past brains or people, *why are occurrences happening in this location?*

Let's say that "paranormal information" is similar to radio waves. *If you are walking around the city, why is reception better in one area?* Some of us remember adjusting the rabbit ear antennas of a TV until we got the right configuration for a channel. *What makes that configuration best?* I encourage others to ask this question relative to paranormal phenomena such as hauntings, ghosts, spirits, and so on.

Other important questions are: What makes the witness unique? Why did they have this experience and the numerous others who visited this location did not? Obviously, this percipient is not experiencing these types of phenomena at work, or in other areas where they live, so why here at this location and why now?

I believe the answer to hauntings starts with those who are more prone to experience ghostly encounters.

Environmental Sensitivity

Some individuals are more prone to ghostly experiences. Their increased probability of having ghostly encounters has nothing to do with the mysterious and often controversial "psychic" abilities, but rather something that is as simple and concrete as the ability to taste, touch, and smell.

I want to make it clear that environmental sensitivity is not related to psychic sensitivity. Those who claim to be psychic sensitives believe they can sense or communicate with the deceased (for example, John Edward, Sylvia Brown, or Chip Coffey). Those who are classified as environmentally sensitive are simply affected by the surrounding environment to a higher degree than the normal population.

As humans, we are affected by and react to the environment in different ways. It has been suggested that the physical environment affects certain individuals more than others, which may lead to varying environmental conditions and dysfunctions within an individual.[2,3] Think about the sense of taste for example. We can all taste foods, but there are individuals called "supertasters" who experience the sense of taste with far greater intensity than the general population. This is true with environmental stimuli as well. According to Michael Jawer, the emotions researcher, these individuals would be categorized as environmentally sensitive.[4] Past research points to environmental sensitivity as a neurobiological phenomenon where certain

individuals, from birth onward, are capable of registering very slight differences or changes in the physical environment. These individuals are predisposed to a number of conditions, illnesses, and perceptions that, due to their unusualness as well as intensity, distinguish them from the general population.[5] Basically, they are distinguished by their sensitivity to low-level environmental stimuli, resulting in negative, undesirable symptoms. These low-level environmental stimuli do not affect the general population, are usually tolerated well, and result in no negative symptoms.

Environmentally sensitive individuals commonly report long-standing allergies, chronic pain and fatigue, migraines, or sensitivity to lights, sounds, and smells.[6] Many times, symptoms consistent with environmental sensitivity are clustered into diagnoses such as "Environmental Illness," "Sick Building Syndrome," "Multiple Chemical Sensitivity," and "Idiopathic Environmental Intolerance." Environmentally sensitive individuals are also more likely to report that their immediate family members suffered from the same conditions, which raises the possibility that environmental sensitivity has a genetic predisposition.

The idea that we all experience the physical environment differently is not new, but recent research suggests that this difference may have a biological origin.[7,8,9] For example, women exhibit markedly greater sensitivity across all five senses. Females have been shown to exhibit greater sensitivity to smells than males.[10] The results are similar with color perception.[11] Every man who has picked out paint for a room can attest to this increased color perception in women.

Smell also seems to vary among cultures. Out of 1,000 olfactory genes, 600 are pseudogenes, which are inherited like genes, however were recently thought to have lost their function.[12] These pseudogenes were recently discovered to still function in certain individuals as studies suggest that each person has a unique combination of functioning pseudogenes, giving them an individualized set of smell receptors.[13]

The idea that certain people are seemingly predisposed toward extraordinary sensitivity has led to research that has uncovered overlaps between environmental sensitivity and certain physical conditions.[14,15] Conditions such as migraines, fibromyalgia, irritable bowel syndrome (IBS), chronic fatigue syndrome, and asthma/allergies all have an overt association with environmental sensitivity and are also linked with

depression, more prevalent in women (with symptoms getting worse during menstruation), and have genetic predispositions. Overlaps among migraines, fibromyalgia, IBS, and chronic fatigue syndrome have led researchers to suspect that these conditions have a similar neurobiological basis, which leads to hypersensitivity.[16,17]

One condition that is linked with heightened sensitivity to the environment is migraines. Some of the symptoms of migraines include increased sensitivity to environmental stimuli such as light, sound, and smell.[18] Environmental hypersensitivities are not only symptoms of migraines, but are also one of the leading triggers of migraines. Environmental triggers of migraines include bright light, flickering/flashing lights, loud noises, intense smells, changes of weather/climate, smoking, and stuffy atmospheres. Recent studies have suggested that those with migraines have a more sensitive nervous system than most.[19,20] Fibromyalgia involves chronic widespread pain, fatigue, sleep disturbances, impaired concentration, memory issues, headaches, allergic symptoms, and hypersensitivity to environmental stimuli (odors, bright light, loud noises). Fibromyalgia sufferers also report that their symptoms are aggravated by changing weather, especially humidity and barometric pressure.[21]

Environmental Sensitivity and EMFs

Electrosensibility (the ability to perceive or sense electric and electromagnetic fields) and electromagnetic hypersensitivity (EHS) (developing physical and mental health symptoms due to exposure to electromagnetic fields tolerated by the general population) are considered environmental conditions.[22,23]

The symptoms of EHS overlap with other environmental conditions such as fibromyalgia, sick building syndrome, migraines, chronic fatigue syndrome, and allergies, which suggest that individuals with these conditions could share an overall heightened environmental sensitivity.[24,25] Fibromyalgia patients also report electrosensibility, stating that they believe they can hear and feel electricity. Seeing and feeling electricity, as you may recall, is often reported in ghostly encounters. Some have reported that "their brains seemed to be wound up by electrical storms, the full moon, auroras, and solar flares."[26] Those with fibromyalgia often report that their

presence affects street lights, VCRs, computers, or other electrical equipment.[27] One's presence affecting electrical appliances or machines is a commonly reported occurrence during ghostly encounters and poltergeist activity. Research found that those who were categorized as environmentally sensitive were significantly more likely to assert that they were affected by and affect electrical appliances.[28]

There is a great deal of controversy regarding whether hypersensitivity to EMFs is the cause of EHS symptoms. Although the evidence is far from clear-cut, there is research suggesting that EHS and electrosensibility have a neurobiological basis.[29,30,31,32] There is also evidence that participants who reported being sensitive to EMFs differ from the general population in cortical excitability parameters and altered central nervous system function.[33] Self-reported electrosensitives displayed significantly reduced intracortical facilitation, which could possibly account for the higher vulnerability of these participants to environmental stimuli and which suggests a "neurobiological predisposition to higher vulnerability for environmental influences."[34] In another study, the authors state that "very electrosensible people do exist and that they both individually and as a group can be differentiated from the general population."[35] There is also evidence that suggests females are significantly more sensitive to electricity than males,[36] which is interesting because woman are also more likely to be environmentally sensitive as well as report paranormal experiences. What a coincidence!

Environmental Sensitivity and Ghostly Encounters

Michael Jawer has studied environmentally sensitive individuals extensively, and has identified certain characteristics that are common among those with environmental sensitivities and environmental conditions. These characteristics are significantly different than with the control groups. One of the differences pertains to paranormal experiences, as those who were categorized as environmentally sensitive reported experiencing a higher number of paranormal and apparitional experiences.[37] Electrosensibility, EHS, and fibromyalgia have also been linked with an increased number of paranormal experiences in other studies as well.[38,39]

Among those who describe themselves as "electrical sensitives," 70 percent claimed to have had at least one psychic experience.[40]

Because different sensitivities to environmental factors are well-established, if there were effects from MFs, not everyone would react the same. *If there is a "magnetic sense" present in all humans and magnetic fields are associated with ghostly experiences, perhaps those with an increased sensitivity to the environment would be more likely to have ghostly encounters*. If a collective conscious existed in the Earth's magnetic field, these individuals would be more receptive to detect and gather information than the general population. This means they are more prone to paranormal experiences.

Jawer provides evidence that environmentally sensitive individuals do report more past paranormal experiences, stating, "if anomalous influences exist in the external environment, certain individuals will register these more clearly versus others who see, hear, feel, and smell through a denser veil of internal imagery."[41]

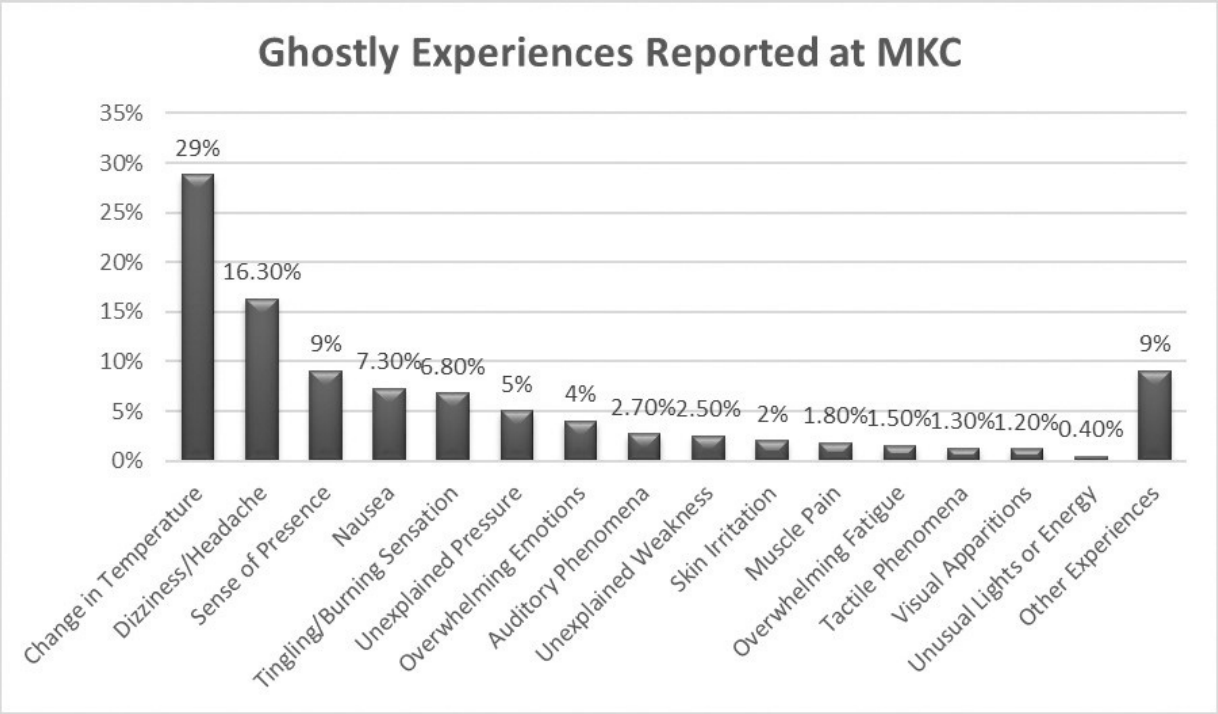
Haunt-Type Experiences of Environmentally Sensitive People

While studying parapsychology in Edinburgh, Scotland, I completed my research dissertation on environmental sensitivity and paranormal experiences in a well-known haunted location called Mary King's Close. Mary King's Close (MKC) is located on Edinburgh's Royal Mile[42] and has been featured on several television shows including *Ghost Hunter International, Most Haunted*, and *Cities of the Underworld*. MKC consists of underground apartments and businesses that were used during the 1600s. MKC is shrouded in myths and urban legends, and is reported to be the setting of many murders. Individuals suffering from the plague were, according to reports, walled up and left for dead in MKC. As with most stories, it is unclear how much is true. What is true is that this location has had countless reports of haunt-type phenomena and ghostly experiences. MKC is currently a tourist attraction and numerous historical tours are conducted throughout the day.

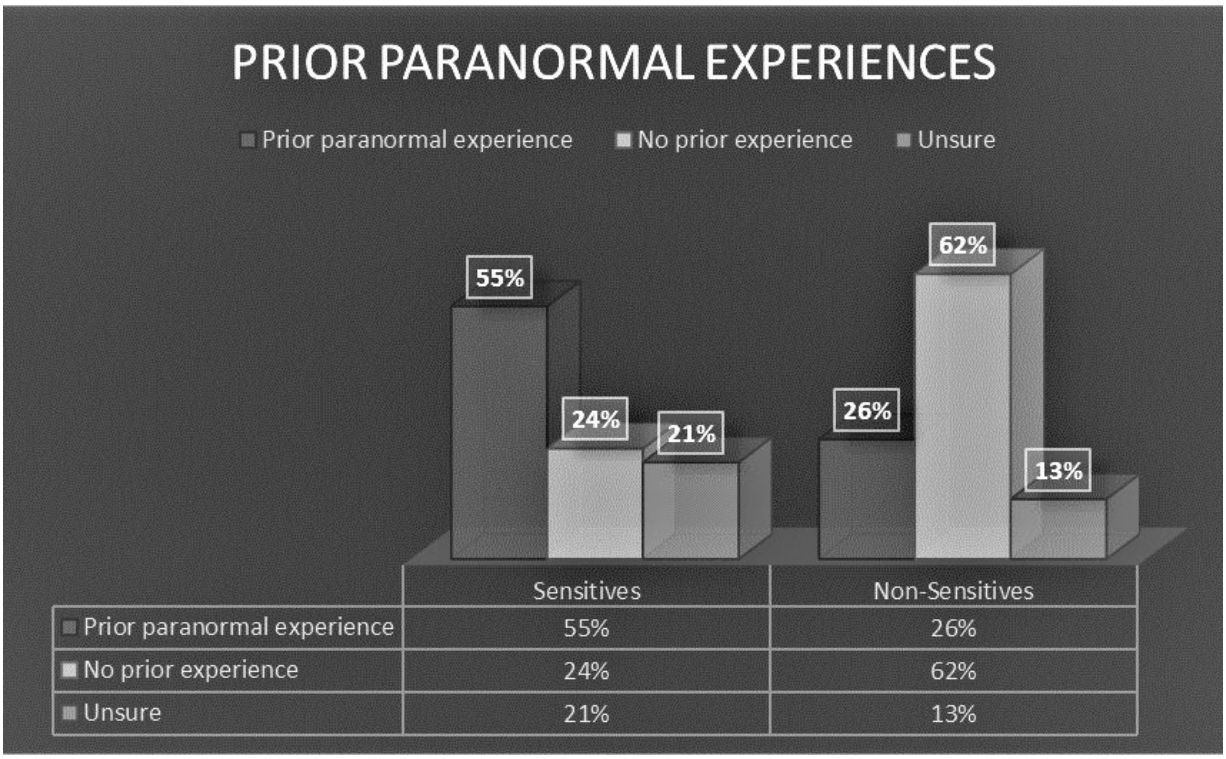
A total of 251 participants attended one of my 25 experimental sessions. During the sessions, participants entered MKC with their tour guide and group, and began the tour. While on the tour, participants were asked to

report any unusual experiences. Prior to the tour, participants completed a questionnaire which categorized them as environmentally sensitive or not. The questionnaire also looked at participants' past paranormal experiences.[43]

Among the 251 participants, there were 601 ghostly experiences reported while visiting Mary King's Close. The 601 ghostly experiences are indicated in this chart.[44]

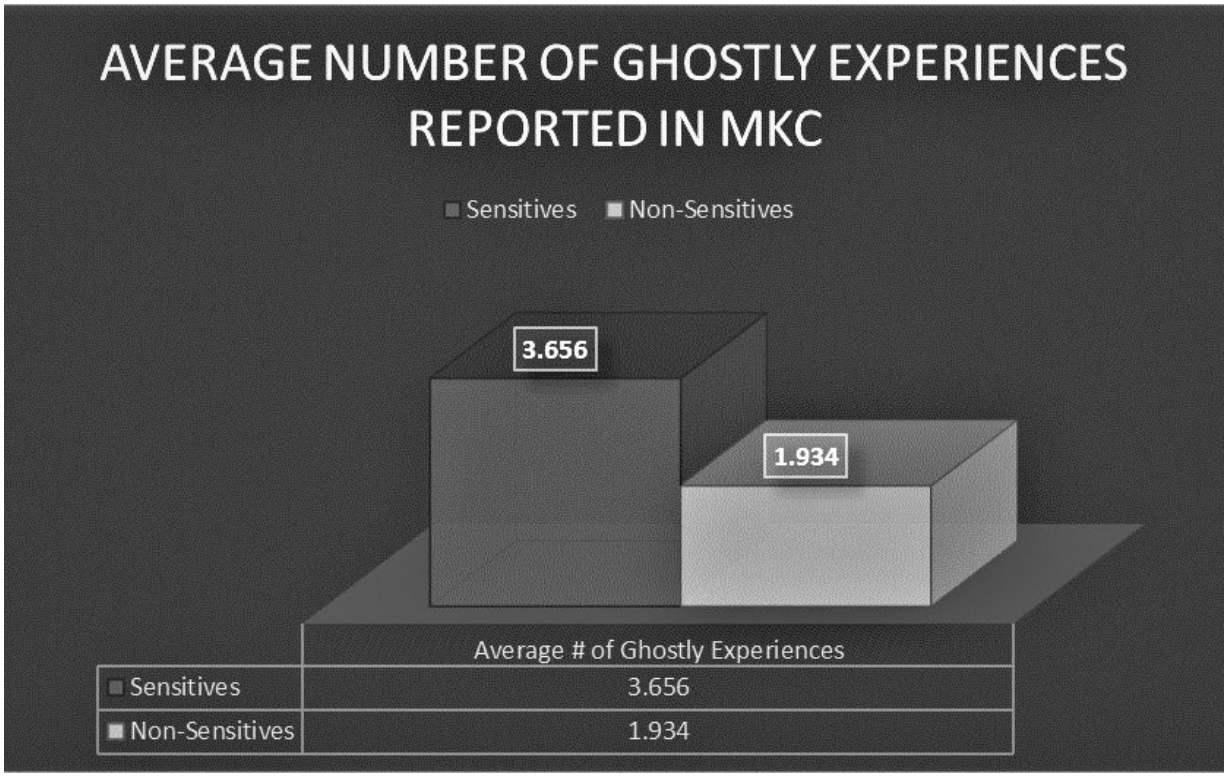


The first aim of the study was determining if those categorized as environmentally sensitive did indeed report more prior paranormal experiences. It is important to stress that this refers to their *past* paranormal experiences. In other words, it is ascertaining if the participant had a previous paranormal experience prior to coming to MKC. As it turns out, environmentally sensitive individuals did report more previous paranormal experiences.[45]



	Sensitives	Non-Sensitives
Prior paranormal experience	55%	26%
No prior experience	24%	62%
Unsure	21%	13%

The next part of the study looked at the difference of reported haunt-type experiences people had when they visited MKC. Therefore, the second aim of the study was to determine if environmentally sensitive people had more experiences than non-sensitives while visiting an allegedly haunted location (MKC). As you can tell by the following graph, those categorized as environmentally sensitive reported almost twice as many haunt-type experiences than non-sensitives.[46]



Another interesting finding of my research was that environmentally sensitive individuals reported significantly more haunt-type experiences in rooms at MKC that registered higher MF readings, whereas there was no difference in reports of haunt-type experiences between rooms for non-sensitives. These results considered environmental cues (perceived eeriness and EMF) and prior knowledge, which provides more evidence that environmentally sensitive participants could be responding to actual differences in MF levels.[47]

When I completed my research, I assumed that the findings provided further evidence that individuals were misinterpreting environmental stimuli (MFs) as being paranormal. But after considering my results, and integrating research on entanglement, non-locality, and theories on collective consciousness, I have changed my mind to some degree.

Renowned parapsychologist Harvey J. Irwin also looked into environmental sensitivity and was able to find a relationship between sensitivity and both anomalous experiences and paranormal attributes. Irwin uses the term “sensory-processing sensitivity” and, though his categorization methods were different, he was looking at extreme sensitivity to external stimulation.[48] He advocates for further psychometric evaluation

of the categorization methods for environmental sensitivity, with which I agree, stating, "Further research is needed to ascertain whether the relationship with sensory processing are founded on some unusual sensitivity to psi signals or the more mundane hyperaesthesia, a high sensitivity to environmental cues."[49]

Although I still believe that a significant amount of reported haunt-type phenomena is the result of misinterpreting ambiguous stimuli such as MFs, *there are some experiences that are truly paranormal in nature*. It can also be said that these environmentally sensitive individuals experience a different world than non-sensitives. *These sensitives are better at sensing external magnetic fields than the general population, therefore, have a better antennae and biological radio in the electromagnetic spectrum than others*.

All radios have the basic equipment to pick up or tune into radio waves; however, some are more refined, sophisticated, and able to pick up stations more clearly. These environmentally sensitive individuals, using their superior biological radios, are better at detecting and gathering information from the environment, specifically magnetic fields. This sensitivity makes them more prone to paranormal, psi, and haunt-type experiences. *Although the general population has the ability to truly experience paranormal phenomena, it is more likely to be detected or registered among those in this special group. The research presented in this chapter supports that those who are environmentally sensitive are more prone to experience apparitions at haunted locations because they are more tuned into the environment than the general population*.

It is apparent that environmentally sensitive individuals experience a different world, as they are biologically wired to sense external magnetic fields more than the general population. Environmentally sensitive individuals may be picking up past information in the environment that surrounds us. If Sheldrake's morphic fields and Persinger's belief that Earth's magnetic field can contain all of past humanity's experiences and memories, then those who are environmentally sensitive are more likely to tap into this collective consciousness.

Certain individuals are better at detecting or gathering information from the environment, whether it is telepathic impressions, crisis apparitions, or any other type of psi phenomena. This still does not explain what makes

certain locations haunted: “Why are these haunt-type phenomena happening in this location?” “What makes this house, hospital, or motel special?”

What Makes This Location Haunted?

Michael Jawer, in an article in *Spirituality and Health Magazine*, discusses “The Anatomy of a Haunting.” His thoughts center on how the deceased can leave behind “traces,” which, in certain situations, others who are sensitive enough can detect.[50] He discusses recent research by French virologist Lue Antoine Montaginer, who was trying to identify the HIV virus. As part of this research, Montaginer discovered that bacteria leave behind electromagnetic traces, which contain genetic information.

Jawer posited that, if bacteria leave behind measurable energetic traces that contain significant information, should not human beings be capable of the same thing? He believed that, in certain situations or emotional states, these energetic traces of people might become amplified to the point of being detectable as apparitions.[51] Jawer’s theory is similar to the imprint or place theory presented in Chapter 1.

Place theory states that the environment can hold the memory of past events, which can be viewed, heard, smelled, tasted, or felt at a later time by a person with sufficient sensitivity to the information. Place theory has been around a while, but the mechanisms for how an environment could hold energy traces are unknown. The general belief is that if there is an extreme amount of energy released during a tragic event or death, it is “burned” into the environment. Jawer took this a step further and hypothesized how the environment could hold and maintain these traces of energy memory using Montaginer’s research, which shows that bacteria leave trace amounts of electromagnetic energy. Much like Fodor and Jung, Jawer understands the pivotal role that intense emotions play in paranormal experiences. Jawer goes into great detail discussing the neurobiology of how the body responds to a crisis or perceived threat:

> If you suddenly feel a bug crawling up your leg, or hear a siren wailing in the distance, your amygdala will instantly activate your body’s fight-or-flight hormones and prepare your sympathetic nervous system (heart and lungs, muscles, and gut) for possible

> action. This alarm takes only thousandths of a second, so quick that the neocortex (the "thinking brain") has nary a chance to judge if the presumed threat is real, assess potential courses of action, and make a rational decision. The evolutionary value of this quickness must lie in the need for a split-second response if early humans were to survive an emergency, such as a predator poised for the kill.... So, picture this: your amygdala has just sounded the alarm. Before your neocortex knows what's happening, you startle, you freeze. Your entire body—your nervous system and everything else—is poised for further action. Especially if the threat is perceived as life or death, the stakes are raised to the highest possible level. The energy summoned up will be considerable. As an analogy, imagine that you are making love with your partner; you are on the verge of climax when suddenly, some outside force stops you. Now, multiply that feeling of withholding by a hundred, and you'll get a sense for the amount of energy aroused by a life-threatening experience.[52]

This energy—created by a trauma, crisis, or overwhelming fearful event (for example, a gunshot wound, a death, having someone threaten you with a gun or weapon, having a burglar in the house)—which is unable to be processed, disposed, or properly expressed as feelings, is displaced into the external environment, in essence, embedding an energy or electromagnetic trace of that person's memories, feelings, and preoccupations in that traumatic moment into the environment. With the "presence" now placed in the electromagnetic environment, it can later be experienced by others. Jawer states:

> Unfortunately, though, in some situations the energy cannot be disposed: no meaningful action can be taken and no feelings expressed. The unresolved concerns, I suggest, in tandem with the individual's latent energy, can, in these extraordinary situations, be displaced into the environment itself, taking something of that person—his or her memories, desires, feelings, preoccupations—into the surroundings. The apparition or "presence" that results is a partial representation of the person who was alive, a projection of what he or she was concerned with, what he or she cared about, what he or she liked or disliked.... The folklore surrounding ghosts suggests that a

> deceased person had unfinished business and so returned to a certain place not knowing he or she was dead. This makes it sound as though, through sheer force of will, an individual can haunt a given location. My explanation differs, focusing as it does on the biological and neurological struggles paralleling one another within the person faced with a mortal threat. As such, it is potentially something that science can investigate.[53]

An important part of Jawer's hypothesis is that this electromagnetic trace contains the deceased individual's memories, desires, feelings, concerns, likes, and dislikes. In essence, a snapshot of the person's entire emotional and cognitive make-up as they faced a violent death or life-threatening experience is left behind. This might explain, to a degree, why psychics are more likely to "sense" the emotions of the deceased individual, stating things such as "He was angry," or "She is scared and confused," when touring haunted locations.

We are now familiar with what makes certain witnesses unique or more prone to ghostly encounters, as well as some introductory thoughts on why ghostly experiences are occurring at certain locations. Next, we will go into detail on my theory on hauntings.

9
MY HAUNTING HYPOTHESIS

As discussed in the previous chapter, Jawer's contention is that the environment is holding the energy released during a tragic event. In some way, the tragedy or violent death is burned into the electromagnetic trace in that location. Unlike Jawer and place or imprint theory, I don't believe that the event (violent death) is what causes an imprint into the electromagnetic tracings, but rather the telepathic message that the agent had sent during the traumatic event or violent death, which is subsequently imprinted into the environment.

Place memory, stone tape theory, and the imprint theory all state that there is an extreme amount of energy released during tragic events or deaths that is somehow burned into the environment. The belief is that the emotionally charged event is imprinted where it originated and storage of that event or energy remains at that specific location. This limits the haunting to one particular location. My belief is that the *telepathic message is stored or stuck*, which, as we will see in upcoming case examples, can be obtained not only at its origins, but at the end point of the telepathic message due in large part to the environment.

Think back to the spontaneous case examples we discussed in Chapter 7. These cases all involved one-time paranormal occurrences of telepathic communication at a distance. The experiences that witnesses reported in these telepathic messages from others in distress mimicked commonly reported ghost-type phenomena, such as apparitions, weird noises, emotional impressions, and tactile phenomena. In all the spontaneous case examples, the agent communicated through the environment, which we assume to be the Earth's electromagnetic field. In the case of hauntings, that

communication from the agent remained or got stuck in the location it was created. This stuck telepathic message, specific to a certain location, is the basis for what I call Spontaneous Apparitional Trace Theory (SATT).

Let's use the case example we have grown to know to further explain Spontaneous Apparitional Trace Theory:

In 1973, Deborah had a 21-year-old son who had been deployed to Vietnam. According to Deborah, "I woke up one morning around 2 a.m. feeling like I had been punched in the head. I was covered in sweat, had a terrible headache, and felt blood gushing down my face. I couldn't breathe and was gasping for air as if choking. I felt as if my lungs were filling with water or sludge, so I went to the bathroom to try and cough up the substance. I was overwhelmed with feelings of fear, sadness, and anger. Feeling weak, I sat down on the bathroom floor while crying. At that moment, I heard my son's voice saying 'Tell my mom I love her...please tell her I love her.' My symptoms vanished within seconds. Picking myself off the floor, I looked in the mirror and saw no blood or bump that would indicate I hurt my head." A week later, Deborah learned of her son's death which occurred at the same time as her strange symptoms that evening. According to reports, he died from a gunshot to the chest and severe head trauma.

This is a spontaneous case where the agent (son) was a soldier serving in Vietnam who had died on the battlefield. Battlefields are often reported to be haunted (for example, Gettysburg, Pennsylvania) and are often the sites of reported ghostly sightings and occurrences. In this case, the agent (a soldier) was in a life-threatening crisis (gunshot) and was able to communicate feelings of distress and tactile phenomena (a feeling of being choked and blood dripping down the head) to the percipient (his mother) who was living in another country. The life-threatening event (gunshot) and ultimate death, as well as the telepathic communication, occurred once between two individuals who were emotionally linked in 1973.

Let's skip ahead more than 40 years to the present time and review an event where an environmentally sensitive individual was touring the battlefield where the agent (son/soldier) had died. While walking on the battlefield, the tourist began to have trouble breathing, as if being choked, felt blood dripping down his head, and saw an apparition of a soldier being shot, which are similar experiences that the percipient (mother) had

reported in 1973. These types of haunt-type experiences are commonly reported in haunted locations and ghost stories.

Let's further speculate that other people also had these experiences while visiting that battlefield location for a number of years, which resulted in this battlefield being considered haunted. *Is this the ghost of the soldier harassing the tourists to this battlefield?*

Let's take another view. Perhaps the haunt-type phenomena reported is instead the soldier's lingering telepathic communication to his mother from 1973, which certain environmentally sensitive individuals are tapping into in current time. It is not the event of the tragic death that burned itself into the electromagnetic trace, but the telepathic communication sent by the agent (soldier) at his time of death, which lingers in this location's magnetic make-up. *This means that the ghostly experiences could be a trace of the spontaneous apparitional experience that occurred between mother (percipient) and agent (soldier) in 1973*—and not the result of the soldier's ghost or the tragic event that was burned into the environment.

As we discussed in previous chapters, intense emotions related to life-threatening events have the ability to affect every cell in our body and reverberate throughout the body, resulting in internal energy or bioenergetic shifts. These internal bioenergetic fluctuations alter our human electrical field, which, as discussed previously, extends outside of our bodies into the atmosphere where they can resonate, link up with, or synchronize with others with whom we are connected. In this case, the synchronization occurred between mother and son (soldier) in 1973. Therefore, it is not the tragic event or violent death that was burned into the environment, but the message that was sent in 1973 that lingers.

Perhaps in every haunted location there was an individual who sent a distress call to someone with whom they were emotionally linked that has been stuck at that location. Perhaps this is what sensitives and ghost hunters are encountering in these locations. I think that this hypothesis can account for a great deal of recurrent apparitions and hauntings. As we have seen in previous case examples, individuals are capable of communicating at great distances, which can present as commonly reported haunt-type phenomenon, such as apparitions, sounds, tactile experiences, bright lights, and strong emotions.

Haunting Case Examples

This is the example that I presented at the start of the previous chapter:

> That first night at the Ft. Magruder Inn in Williamsburg, Virginia, I woke up with the feeling you get when someone is standing behind you. Uneasily I rolled over, only to be confronted by a ghastly sight: a young Civil War solider standing by the bed, staring at me. He was very young—no more than 15 or 16—and wore light-colored, brownish-grey clothing. Half of his face had been shot away.... I could hardly bear to look at him. He was so utterly miserable. "Go away, please," I pleaded with him. "Go to the light, please. Just go to the light." He returned for two more nights, never saying anything, never moving from that rigid corpse-like position.[1]

The author points out that the hotel he was staying at was built on the site of the Battle of Williamsburg which occurred in 1862. This account is very typical of a haunted house and involves witnessing an apparition on several occurrences, usually while either preparing for bed or while awakening. Again, this is most likely due to the relaxed mental state we are in while preparing to fall asleep or waking up, and not the result of hypnagogic/hypnopompic hallucinations (see Chapter 10) as those types of hallucinations are typically vague (such as shadows) and not as specific and detailed as this eyewitness account. In this account, the apparition doesn't speak, move, emit a smell (such as gunpowder, cologne, etc.) and appears to simply remain still and stare.

Let's use the previous case to further explain SATT. I believe that in this haunting case, the witness picked up on a lingering telepathic distress message sent in 1862 from a Civil War soldier who was facing death. To whom the message was originally sent is unknown. But let's speculate that the soldier's mother had experienced an apparition of her son (similar to the apparition witnessed in the case example) in 1862, which most likely led to her believing that her son was killed in battle.

In the case of the witness seeing a young Civil War soldier at the foot of his bed with a gunshot wound, I believe the witness is picking up on a past telepathic message. Take a moment to look back at the case example "Ex-Husband's Goodbye" from Chapter 7, in which the percipient, while awake

in bed, saw an apparition of her ex-husband gazing at her, and the case example "Cousin Jerry" (Chapter 7), in which, while lying in bed, Tori saw an apparition of her cousin. In both these cases, the percipients found out the next day that the people they saw in apparitional form had passed away the previous night. The ghost-like phenomena of the spontaneous case examples and the eyewitness account of the Civil War ghost soldier are very similar as they both involve a visual apparition.

But there are two distinct differences between the spontaneous case examples and the Civil War ghost haunting. First, in the spontaneous case examples from Chapter 7, there was a familial or emotional link between the percipients and the agents, whereas there is no link between the Civil War ghost and the eyewitness.

Second, in the spontaneous case examples, the apparition occurred only once, at the time of the agent's death, whereas the Civil War ghost occurred on three consecutive nights, more than 100 years after the soldier's death, which suggests a haunting. What we have is a distress message lingering or being trapped in the electromagnetic tracings of a location and certain environmentally sensitive individuals picking up on that past distress message, which elicits ghost-type phenomena.

Here is another haunting example. This ghostly account occurs during the 1940s, in a house outside of Akron, Ohio, which was built in the 1860s. The present-day occupants, Anne and Jack, were renting the house.

> On May 24th, Anne and Jack lingered over dinner, watching the lights come on in the valley below. Just as Anne poured Jack another cup of tea, there came the sound of feet pounding across the upper floor and down the steps. A boy's voice called "Ma! Oh, Ma!" The renters raced into the living room, but the voice was already beyond the front door. Before Jack could open the door, there came a horrific crash and a series of blood-chilling screams ending in a gurgling choke. Then dead stillness as Jack and Anne swung the door open and looked out into the spring twilight.[2]

These phenomena occurred daily and in an effort to determine what was occurring, Anne spoke with the local grocer who told her that nobody had stayed in their house past May 24th. The grocer went on to state that in 1871, the youngest son had convinced his mother to allow him to go to

Chicago to pursue the bricklaying trade and, reluctantly, his mother gave her permission. According to the grocer, on May 24th the son, while working in Chicago, fell off the scaffolding and crashed to the ground, breaking his neck. It was reported that the son had shrieked something as he was falling to his death. Just about that time of day, his mother, resting in her chair (in Akron), heard her son rushing down the stairs calling her name. The mother reported that she then heard her son go out the front door and she heard his body falling. It was reported that she started crying and knew her son had died (she received a telepathic message).

When we hear the origin story of the haunting, we can piece together the phenomena that were reported by Anne and Jack 70 years after the original spontaneous telepathic distress message was sent by the son (agent) to his mother (percipient). Anne and Jack had reported almost identical phenomena that the mother reportedly experienced, which included footsteps running down the steps and out the front door, a boy's voice, and a horrific crash, as if a body was falling. Anne and Jack reported that the boy's screams ended with a gurgling choke, which would be consistent with the son's reported death by falling and breaking his neck. Truly amazing was that this telepathic message that was sent 70 years prior is somehow re-experienced. Other aspects that make this case interesting is that the experience had *two* witnesses (Jack and Anne), and that it is *not* the location of the tragic death, or point of origin of the message (Chicago), but the endpoint of the message (Akron) in which the message lingers. This means that it is not just the location of the violent or life-threatening event or origins of the life-threatening telepathic distress call (in this case, Chicago) in which phenomena can linger, but also the destination point (in this example, Akron).

This is an important distinction which further distinguishes that it is not the *event* that is lingering or imprinted in the magnetic fields of the atmosphere, but rather *the telepathic distress message*. This could explain why certain hauntings are of apparitions of people who never resided in the haunted location because the haunted location could be the end point of the message and not the origins of the emotional crisis or tragic event.

The next case example involves a man who began to rent the upper portion of a duplex:

> I had always been a sound sleeper, but one night I awoke from a sound sleep as though I had been rudely aroused. I could see the archway clearly. The figure of a man was sharply outlined against the drapery. He was slight of build and dressed in a red smoking jacket. A white scarf with irregularly shaped polka dots was loosely knotted around his neck. In one of his hands he held a cigarette from which smoke rose in a slow gray spiral.[3]

The renter later found out that the landlord's brother had committed suicide by cutting his throat. The landlord had found her brother near death, slumped in the archway. He was dressed in a red smoking jacket and a cigarette lay beside him. The blood from his neck was spilling over onto his white scarf making round red blotches. At the time, the landlord had lived in the house with the brother. It is not known how she had become aware that her brother had attempted suicide.

Here we have a witness who experienced an apparition which accurately describes not only the man who committed suicide in this location, but what he was wearing when he died. We don't know the history of this ghostly encounter; however, I speculate using SATT. It was reported that the landlord who was the deceased's sister had found him near death. Again, we are not sure what inclination she had to check on him at the time. Perhaps, while he was in an emotional crisis and life-threatening situation, he had managed to communicate distress or regret to his sister. She could have witnessed an apparition of her brother in distress (with blood on his white scarf), wearing a red smoking jacket, causing her to become worried and check on his well-being. Fast forward several years to the ghostly encounter with the renter of the duplex. He could have tapped into this previous telepathic message and witnessed the deceased in his red smoking jacket with blood on his white scarf. Through the years, perhaps other renters have had the same ghostly encounter as they, too, are tapping into this previous telepathic message. Perhaps there are other renters who lived in the house for years and never had any ghostly encounters as well, which could mean that they are not as environmentally sensitive as those who have had the encounters.

Billy was a handyman who recently purchased a home built in the 1920s with the goal of restoring it to its original beauty. He lived alone in the house while he was doing the restoration. He had chosen the master

bedroom as his respite, however soon realized that he would never get a good night's rest. He was awakened every night by an apparition of a young woman dressed in a 1940s nurse uniform. She would not speak, however she always appeared in great distress, crying, and motioning toward him to help.

Billy (the witness) looked into the history of this house and could not find any records of anyone dying in the house or that any previous occupants were nurses, which baffled him due to his ghostly encounters with this young woman in the nurse's uniform. It is apparent that this young woman may not have died in this location and that the apparition begging for help is the end point of a telepathic message meant for a family member who lived and slept in this room and house in the past. Perhaps this apparition was seeking help or communicating some type of distress to a family member (mother, sister) who lived in the house. Again, it was this telepathic distress call which the witness picked up on.

SATT and EVPS, Ghost Boxes, and EMF Meters

In talking with paranormal enthusiasts, there is a strong belief that ghosts often relay messages via tape recorders, Ouija boards, ghost boxes, and EMF meters. Perhaps there is some type of interaction occurring through these pieces of equipment in terms of intercepting or tapping into a telepathic message which has lingered from a past event. I will admit that I'm not really that familiar with the theories, past research, and technical aspects of EVPs, ghost boxes, and other forms of spirit communication. It may be that this equipment is somehow picking up previous telepathic distress messages which are being transmitted through the electromagnetic atmosphere. This area of research warrants its own book.

Again we ask, *Are these electromagnetic traces in fact ghosts? Did these deceased individuals survive death and return to "haunt" the living?* I state clearly that I am in no way suggesting that ghosts and spirits do not exist. What I am conveying is that there are paranormal phenomena occurring (other than ghosts) that can mimic and be misinterpreted as commonly reported ghostly experiences.

As discussed in previous chapters, the term "ghost" implies survival after death. I do not exclude the possibility of ghosts occurring. In fact, I

encourage those interested in the paranormal to work to prove the existence of ghosts. With that said, just because an experience is not the result of a ghost that does not mean the experience itself does not reflect paranormal phenomena.

The paranormal phenomena that I have discussed in this book, such as apparitions and telepathic communication, are just as fascinating and awesome as ghosts per se. Think about the impact, breadth, and implications of these paranormal phenomena, and you will conclude that if haunting phenomena are the result of ghosts or lingering telepathic messages stuck in the Earth's magnetic field, they are both deserving of further dedicated research and respect.

Summary

Hauntings are the most popular type of ghostly phenomena in modern society. Ghost-hunting reality shows and paranormal celebrities have toured the world visiting every location that is alleged to be haunted. There are hundreds of books on haunted locations in every state and in many cities. This is a fascinating reflection on what captivates our society's attention.

This chapter introduced you to Spontaneous Apparitional Trace Theory (SATT), which states that hauntings or recurrent apparitions are more or less telepathic distress messages which are stuck in the electromagnetic tracings of a location. Unlike imprint or trace theory, I don't believe that the event (violent death) is what causes an imprint into the electromagnetic tracings, but rather the telepathic message that the agent had sent during the traumatic event or violent death, which is subsequently imprinted into the environment.

In every haunted location, there was an individual who sent a distress call to someone with whom they were emotionally linked. The distress call remains "stuck" or embedded at that location. Perhaps this is what sensitives and ghost hunters are encountering in these locations. This hypothesis can explain many recurrent apparitions and hauntings.

My theory also differs from imprint or place theory in that a haunting doesn't have to coincide with the location or origin of the tragic event or telepathic distress message, but can occur at the destination or endpoint of

the telepathic message. This accounts for why apparitions of deceased people who never resided in or visited a haunted location appear there.

This chapter also introduced research on environmentally sensitive individuals who are more prone to ghostly encounters due to their biological make-up. All radios have the basic equipment to pick up or tune into radio waves; however, some are more refined, sophisticated, and able to pick up stations more quickly and clearly. These environmentally sensitive individuals, and their superior biological radios, are better at detecting and gathering information from the environment, specifically the Earth's magnetic fields.

10
NOT EVERYTHING IS PARANORMAL

Even the most steadfast believer in ghosts must admit that there are normal, natural causes for ghostly encounters. Ghostly orb photographs can be due to dust or insects. Individuals may mistake a passing car's headlights as a ghostly shadow moving across their bedroom. Noises in the attic can be mice or raccoons. There are also individuals who intentionally commit fraud, lie for attention, fabricate or doctor pictures, add special effects to videos, or fake recordings to seek their 15 minutes of fame. In order to determine if a ghostly encounter is genuine, one must be able to rule out normal or natural causes to ghostly experiences. When investigating paranormal claims, one must keep an open mind and admit that some paranormal reports and experiences can be attributed to mental illness, cognitive biases, sleep paralysis, and even fraud. This chapter offers an understanding of common natural causes for ghostly encounters.

Mental Illness and Ghostly Encounters

Paranormal and ghostly experiences are often attributed to mental illness or hallucinations. People's opinions about ghosts are varied, and reside on a continuum ranging from staunch believer to absolute skeptic. If you want to conduct your own survey, just ask someone, *Do you believe in ghosts?* Whether it's a college professor, plumber, car salesman, or accountant, they will share their opinions. Although it seems that ghosts are becoming more popular than ever, many will respond to this question with something along the lines of "People who see ghosts are crazy." The impression is that those

who hear, see, and feel something that is not apparent to others are mentally ill.

I've read several books and journal articles on parapsychology, and although they discuss the most recent research, it is rare that anyone fully explains the role or definitions of mental health diagnoses relative to paranormal phenomena. As a professional therapist in inpatient units, outpatient clinics, and emergency rooms for more than 15 years, I have much experience in and comfort with diagnosing mental illness. In my opinion, 95 percent of reported ghostly encounters are *not* the result of mental illness. But even if the percentage is low, it remains a possibility that one must be aware of.

The most common diagnoses associated with individuals who report ghostly experiences are schizophrenia, schizophreniform disorder, schizoaffective disorder, delusional disorder, brief psychotic disorder, substance abuse disorders, and certain sleep disorders (nightmare disorder and sleep terror disorder). There is also a great deal of research linking paranormal beliefs to schizotypal personality disorder.

It is necessary to fully understand common terms such as hallucinations and delusions. Hallucinations are a very complex process. The most common hallucination classifications include auditory, visual, olfactory (smell), and tactile (touch). Hallucinations are simply abnormal sensory perceptions that occur when a person is awake. Hallucinations can be the result of mental illness, intoxication, sleep deprivation, stress, and exhaustion.

A general theory is that a hallucination is a misfire by the mechanism in the brain that helps to distinguish conscious external perceptions from internal, memory-based perceptions. Basically, a hallucination is hearing, feeling, or seeing something that others cannot hear, feel, or see. I've interviewed and assessed numerous patients who report hallucinations, and the most common hallucination is auditory. Most often, patients report hearing human voices at all hours of the day, even when the patients know that they are alone. What the voices say varies among patients, but it is common that the voices tell the patients things to do, give suggestions, or make general observations.

Delusions are different from hallucinations as they are not abnormalities in perception, but rather abnormalities in belief. In psychology, there are two types of delusions: bizarre and non-bizarre. Bizarre delusions generally

involve far-fetched fixations such as aliens recording an individual's every thought. Non-bizarre delusions are false beliefs, which are based more in reality. These delusions could involve bodily sensations such as insects in the skin, or the belief that a stranger or celebrity has a special connection with the individual. A person may be delusional, but not experience any hallucinations and vice versa. So for instance, a person might genuinely believe that Angelina Jolie is referencing them and winking at them during a TV interview. She might have winked at the camera, so this is not a hallucination, but rather a delusion as this individual believes adamantly that Ms. Jolie's wink was, in fact, intended specifically and only for them.

Schizophrenia

People's stereotypes of individuals with schizophrenia are different than reality. Schizophrenia has a stigma associated with it, and it is often assumed that those with schizophrenia will look or act a certain way. Actually, there are many individuals with this diagnosis who are highly functioning members of society working as lawyers, realtors, hairdressers, physicians, teachers, and even therapists. If well managed, schizophrenia does not need to consume a person's life. In all probability you have worked with or interacted with a schizophrenic and were not even aware of this fact.

Those who claim to be demonologists or exorcists more than likely will come into contact with individuals with mental health issues. In the past, exorcisms were used to address many symptoms which are now associated with mental illness (for example, delusions, hallucinations, bizarre behaviors, the belief that Satan is talking with them, and so on).

When it comes to symptoms or criteria involved in categorizing or diagnosing a mental illness, it important that the diagnosis is performed by a mental health professional. I am providing here a very brief and simplistic explanation of schizophrenia, but there is a great amount of information and criteria involved in the diagnosis of this mental illness.

According to DSM-5, to be diagnosed with schizophrenia, the client must exhibit delusions, hallucinations, disorganized speech (for example, frequent derailment or incoherence), grossly disorganized behavior or catatonic behavior, and negative symptoms, which include lack or decline

in emotional response, lack or decline in speech, or lack or decline in motivation.[1] These symptoms must occur for several months. Psychotic symptoms lasting less than a month may be diagnosed as a brief psychotic disorder.

Before diagnosing schizophrenia, it is important to rule out any medical issues because certain medical conditions and injuries can present symptoms similar to schizophrenia. One example is a case that I assessed in the emergency room. A young woman had a reaction to a certain medication, which caused her to see and feel insects, and believe she was oozing bacteria. She had no history of hallucinations or delusions. Later, she reported that once she discontinued the medication, her hallucinations abated.

I was reading a book that was written by someone who claimed to be a "Ghost hunter" and "Demonologist." He described cases which he believed gave evidence of possession by spirits. One example that he noted was of "Ann," a 20-year-old woman who had recently moved out of her adoptive parents' house. Ann was on the road to being an independent adult. The author prefaced the story by saying that Ann had no psychiatric history, nor had she been exposed to any traumatic or overwhelming stressors. He discussed how wonderful her life had been until her "possession."

I do not recall how this investigator became involved in her case, but Ann's parents reported that a few months after moving into her own apartment, Ann changed. She was seeing shadow people throughout the apartment and hearing voices telling her to hurt herself. Ann's parents also told the investigator that often when they were visiting her apartment Ann would show no emotion, stare into space for hours, and speak in weird languages that nobody understood. The demonologist diagnosed that Ann was possessed by a spirit or demon that did not want her in the apartment.

Let's objectively review this case, looking at Ann's symptoms relative to the criteria for schizophrenia:

1. **Is Ann having hallucinations?** *Yes, she is having auditory (command) hallucinations, as well as visual hallucinations.*
2. **Is she having delusions?** *Well, we're not too sure about that because not much information is given about what Ann thinks is going on. So, as we have no symptoms or reports of delusions, we have to rule out delusions.*

3. **Is she having any disorganized speech?** *Yes, her parents report that Ann often speaks in weird languages that no one can understand.*
4. **Is she having any disorganized or catatonic behaviors?** *Yes, her parents report that Ann is staring into space for hours, which is the definition of catatonic*.
5. **Is she having any negative symptoms?** *Yes, she was reported to have a blunted affect (facial expression) or lack of emotional response*.
6. **Are there any social or work-related dysfunctions?** *Yes, with the symptoms that are reported, I find it hard to believe that Ann maintains a normal social life or can fulfill her duties at work*.
7. **Is there significant duration?** *No time frame was given; however, if Ann has presented with these symptoms for more than six months, we could suspect schizophrenia. If the symptoms were less than six months, we could also suspect Brief Psychotic Disorder*.

We would have to obtain a medical evaluation for Ann to rule out underlying medical conditions which could cause these symptoms. This medical evaluation is extremely important. For all we know, Ann could have fallen and hit her head, which could have resulted in some neurological issues leading to hallucinations, causing her to be drowsy and affecting her ability to speak.

I'm not sure if this demonologist referred to a DSM text; however, when reading his case example, he clearly declared that Ann had no psychiatric illnesses in the past. Although this may be true, we have to look deeper to fully rule out psychiatric illness. In this case, we have no biological family information on Ann because she was adopted. It could be that Ann's biological mother and father both had diagnoses of schizophrenia, which has a strong genetic component. It is often assumed that if she had schizophrenia it would have been diagnosed before she was age 20. However, schizophrenia is often not diagnosed nor do the symptoms present in an individual until the person is an adult.

Another interesting consideration in diagnosing this case is that schizophrenia is often triggered by a significant life stressor (such as divorce), a traumatic event, or some other overwhelming stressor. In this case, Ann recently moved out of the familiarity and comfort of her childhood home and began living on her own, facing challenges such as

bills, full-time work, unpredictable neighbors, and other responsibilities which contribute to stress.

So what does this mean for Ann? Well, I'm not sure what happened; however, even if she were given a diagnosis of schizophrenia, she is not doomed to live her life in an institution. Once given a medical and psychiatric evaluation, Ann could be placed on medications that, if taken properly, would assure that she could live a normal life.

Ann's example is important for many reasons. This demonologist, I believe, had good intentions and wanted to help Ann and her family; however, automatically assuming the cause to seeing shadow people and hearing voices to be paranormal only delays getting Ann the help she needed.

Reality Testing Deficits

Reality testing deficits sounds bad, but it has nothing to do with the inability to decipher reality from fantasy. Reality testing is basically the process we use to come up with explanations for sensory experiences. We use this cognitive skill often and for the most part, as our knowledge of our surroundings increases, these skills change. For example, a sound in my closet at night when I was 4 years old automatically meant the boogieman was after me; however, at age 36, the boogieman is last on a list of plausible explanations. When presented with external environmental stimuli or experiences, our brain goes through a process of looking for answers to explain the noise, light, or change in temperature. We then come up with hypotheses, which based on our knowledge and experiences explain the stimuli. We rank our hypotheses and settle on the explanation that seems the most plausible.

Past research suggests that pathological beliefs, and to some extent, delusions, occur due to a failure of the individual to subject a hypothetical explanation of an experience to critical testing.[2] When a person is formulating a paranormal explanation for an experience, this explanation may not be subject to the process of rigorous critical evaluation even if further information later becomes available.[3] In essence, one might explain an event as paranormal and then ignore or choose not to re-evaluate this

belief. A good example of this in the ghost-hunting community is the existence of orbs (circular light anomalies).

Twenty years ago, orbs where considered by many to be proof of ghosts. In my recent interactions with paranormal investigators, the community has changed their viewpoint on this subject. Most believe that orbs are dust, insects, or light anomalies, whereas others remain steadfast that orbs are ghosts. I've seen shows and browsed websites that show pictures of orbs as definite proof of ghosts and others that show orbs as dust by re-creations.

Those who believe in orbs most likely have believed in them since they first formed their paranormal belief system and choose to ignore new evidence. Often, these believers will modify their beliefs, such as admitting that some orbs can be dust; however, true orbs do exist and contain features which distinguish them from insects and dust.

There is research which was able to show that reality testing deficits were a predictor of paranormal beliefs.[4] Reality testing deficits were also associated with beliefs in New Age philosophy, psi, witchcraft, superstition, spiritualism, extraordinary life forms, and precognition. This supports the view that the formulation and maintenance of paranormal beliefs may entail deficits in reality testing. In other words, individuals with paranormal beliefs may jump to paranormal explanations without critical evaluation.

Skeptics love the idea of reality testing deficits, as they will often report that steadfast believers do not apply critical thinking and will even ignore any data that contradicts their beliefs. However, it is very easy to be a skeptic and to dismiss the data, experiences, and encounters of the believers. With this being said, if you encounter new data, such as a photography specialist who sees signs of fraud in a reported photo of a ghost, do not instantly dismiss their results; instead, ask questions to better understand.

Unconscious Processes and Transliminality

I do not want to upset your apple cart, but there are processes taking place in your mind of which you will never be aware. Consciousness is the state or quality of awareness. Consciousness is defined as sentience, awareness, subjectivity, the ability to experience or to feel, wakefulness, having a sense of selfhood, and the executive control system of the mind.[5] The

unconscious is the part of the mind that is inaccessible to the conscious mind, but affects behavior and emotions. A central theme in the discussion of the unconscious, which is shared by many, is that there are processes that occur that are outside our realm of awareness.

The unconscious mind is a foundation of psychology, due in large part to the work of Sigmund Freud. Every introduction to psychology text must present Freud's ideas as they were extremely important in advancing psychology as a science. Freud's theories are complex and extensive, but his fundamental idea, from which his other ideas are rooted, is that of the unconscious.

Freud is by no means the creator or the first to study the unconscious. However, if one reads every piece of information regarding different views or perceptions of the unconscious, there does exist some overlap. The unconscious can simply be stated as processes that occur outside the immediate realm of awareness, which affect thoughts, behaviors, emotions, and perceptions of an individual. One cannot deny that there are processes that occur in the mind of which we are not aware; however, definite answers as to what propels these processes may never be known.

"Transliminality" is a concept developed by psychologist Michael Thalbourne, and is defined as a tendency for stimuli and information to cross thresholds in or out of consciousness.[6] Some research suggests that schizophrenic-like experiences are the result of a deficit in cognitive inhibition. Basically, the cognitive mechanisms responsible for suppressing irrelevant information from conscious awareness are defective or erratic. Thalbourne suggests that this leads to a higher degree of interconnectedness in the brains of those who are highly transliminal.

To clarify, we all have unconscious processing which can seep or leak into conscious thought (for example, being scared of cats due to being scratched by one when I was 3 years old), but those who are highly transliminal have too much leakage, which can be misinterpreted.

Let's say that your brain has a security guard who is responsible for keeping unwanted and irrelevant unconscious information out of the consciousness lounge. It may be that some people have inept security guards who are sleeping when they shouldn't be, therefore allowing unwanted and uninvited sensory stimulation into conscious thought. These trespassing unconscious stimuli are now competing with already existing conscious thoughts and causing overstimulation. The material crossing into

conscious awareness without permission would most likely be large amounts of imagery, feelings, and thoughts, which are misinterpreted as paranormal or ghostly experiences such as apparitions, overwhelming fear, or strange noises.

The unconscious is poorly understood by many people. *How can I have thoughts of "things" happening in my head that I'm unaware of and have no control over? Why in the world would I want to deceive myself? What are the benefits to self-deception?*

Take a moment to think about how the unconscious and self-deception relate to paranormal beliefs. We may unconsciously view events in a certain way to ease our internal emotional conflict. The reason I included consideration of the unconscious and of self-deceptions is to increase awareness that these types of internal processes are constantly occurring in every human being.

Absorption and Fantasy-Prone Personality

Absorption is defined as the capacity to focus attention exclusively on an object to the point where there is a heightened sense of reality.[7] High absorption indicates the ability to momentarily inhibit reality monitoring, the cognitive process which distinguishes reality from imagination.[8] Fantasy-prone personality refers to individuals who fantasize most of the time and fully see, hear, and touch what they are fantasizing.[9]

Some characteristics of individuals with fantasy-prone personality include susceptibility to hypnosis, having imaginary friends as a child, adopting a fantasy identity, frequently fantasizing as a child, experiencing imagined sensations as real, having vivid sensory experiences, reliving past experiences, believing they have psychic powers, having out-of-body experiences, receiving messages from higher beings, and experiencing waking dreams.[10] Individuals who score high on absorption and fantasy-proneness scales are also more likely to have paranormal experiences and beliefs.

Ambiguous Stimuli

Another viewpoint regarding paranormal and ghostly experiences is that they are the result of the misinterpretation of ambiguous stimuli. This viewpoint is supported by past research.[11] The idea is that ambiguous stimuli (such as strange noises and shadows) with no conventional explanation leads to fear, which when mixed with humans' intolerance for ambiguity leads to the formulation of paranormal beliefs.[12] These paranormal beliefs then provide a framework for interpretation of the fear-inducing stimuli, resulting in labeling the experience as paranormal.[13] By labeling the ambiguous stimuli as paranormal, it decreases the fear associated with the ambiguous stimuli by providing an explanation.

Ambiguity tolerance is the ability to perceive vague and uncertain information and behavior in a neutral or open way. Intolerance of ambiguity is the perception of ambiguous situations or information as a threat. The following is a simplified equation.

Ambiguous Stimuli (strange noise)
+
Fear
+
Low Ambiguity Tolerance
=
Paranormal Experience/Belief

Other research shows that haunt-type experiences generally cluster in areas which fit the stereotype of what a haunted room should look like.[14] For example, the dark basement is often where people report seeing ghosts because it fits the stereotype of where ghosts would generally hang out. So if a house feels or looks haunted, people tend to report haunt-type experiences in this location.

Hypnagogic/Hypnopompic Hallucinations

This topic is of personal interest to me as I have experienced hypnagogic and hypnopompic hallucinations, as well as sleep paralysis. Hypnagogic or hypnopompic hallucinations are brief visual, tactile, auditory, or other

sensory events, that occur at the transition from wakefulness to sleep (hypnagogic) or from sleep to wakefulness (hypnopompic).[15]

Sleep paralysis is when an individual is suddenly awakened from sleep, but is unable to move and is essentially paralyzed. In this paralyzed state, they often experience terrifying hallucinations. Here is an example from my own experience.

I suffered from sleep paralysis on a pretty consistent basis during my 20s. The "episodes" are terrifying and were so distressing, I was put on a sleeping medication. Here's an example of a typical "episode": I wake up paralyzed and scared. I'm alert; however, I feel foggy as if in a daze. I see a dark shadow usually in the doorway or closet. The shadow always moves toward me and the closer it gets the more terrified I become. The shadow never speaks; however, I know that it is evil. I try to punch or kick the shadow; however, I'm never able to move. Feeling trapped and on the verge of death, I then attempt to yell at it; however, I cannot seem to talk and only grunt or mumble. It seems like hours, but my guess is the episode only lasts seconds. I slowly begin to regain use of my body and speech as the shadow hastily exits the room. The shadow typically never gets to me; however, I do recall a couple times when the shadow did jump on my chest. The pressure was so intense it felt like I had a cinder block on my chest. It only takes a few moments for me to regain full awareness and realize this was another episode of sleep paralysis.

These hallucinatory experiences consistently fall into three categories:[16]

- Intruder experiences which involve a sense of a threatening presence followed by visual, auditory, or tactile hallucinations. Individuals often report a shadow figure walking toward the paralyzed individual and intense fear.
- Incubus experiences include breathing difficulties, feelings as if one is being choked or smothered, and intense pressure on one's chest as if someone or something is standing on it.
- Out-of-body type experiences where the individual feels as if they are flying or floating.

It is estimated that 40 percent of people experience sleep paralysis at some point in their lives. In my experience with conducting mental health assessments, the most common type of reported hallucination among

children, teenagers, adults, and even the elderly is witnessing "shadow figures" when they wake up or are trying to sleep. Most often, when I inform my patients about sleep paralysis and they spend some time educating themselves, they return and we have a good laugh and often share stories.

So why does sleep paralysis occur? The general belief points toward a neurobiological origin.[17] Sleep paralysis happens when one awakens during a stage of sleep called rapid eye movement or REM. When we are sleeping and dreaming, the body and brain are continuing to work. When we dream, the body's muscles are intentionally paralyzed as a way to inhibit people from "acting out" their dreams (running, jumping, biting, fighting, singing, etc.) and possibly hurting themselves (falling out of bed) or those sleeping next to them (kicking their spouse or dog). The moment that sleep paralysis occurs, we become conscious (to some extent), but our muscles remain paralyzed. Consciousness in the case of sleep paralysis is relative, as in my experiences, as I'm awake, albeit foggy or confused.

According to most skeptics, including Joe Nickell from the Committee for Skeptical Inquiry (CSI), many ghosts are the result of waking-dream type hallucinations and other dissociative states.[18] Although this would seem logical based on the descriptions of experiences in sleep paralysis and hypnagogic/hypnopompic hallucinations, I believe that he overestimates the number of people who attribute these episodes to ghosts, and he underestimates the general population's ability to educate themselves after their initial experience with these hallucinations.

Anyone who has experienced sleep paralysis knows that they can regain mobility and awareness within seconds. Once the confusion and fogginess wears off, they are usually able to rationalize the event as a dream or nightmare. I've even heard of experienced sleep paralysis sufferers being able to control and manipulate their hallucinations and dream-like states. I've personally experienced more than 20 episodes of sleep paralysis that I am aware of. Though frightening, these episodes remain fairly consistent (a shadow walking toward me) and never involved the stereotypical haunt-type apparitions. I've never seen a deceased relative or witnessed a Civil War soldier or ghost in period clothes during these episodes. Although my patients often report their own episodes as hallucinations, very rarely do they assign spiritual or ghostly meanings. Again, though these dream-like

hallucinations may account for some reported ghostly experiences, the percentage is extremely low.

Ghosts as Coping Skills

The last set of theories that I will discuss in this chapter are regarding people using paranormal beliefs as a psychological coping mechanism. Coping mechanisms or coping skills are discussed often in psychology education and therapy. We all possess coping skills; however, some are healthy and others are not. Someone who is depressed might watch a funny movie or talk to a friend to decrease or cope with their feelings. An alcoholic may drink to cope with feelings of guilt or shame. We develop these coping skills from early childhood and they help us deal with anxiety, depression, anger, and other negative and uncomfortable feelings.

According to some researchers, people who perceive themselves as having little control over their lives may develop paranormal beliefs, as these beliefs provide an enhanced sense of control.[19] Overall findings point toward a needs-serving model where paranormal beliefs perform a psychodynamic coping function.[20] Several studies indicate that survivors of childhood abuse, parents who were substance abusers, and unsettled home environments all have higher levels of paranormal beliefs than in the control groups.[21] In my opinion, developing a coping strategy which allows a young person to step out of their troubled, current situation can be beneficial; but this might also lead to paranormal beliefs. I had a teenage patient tell me that she prefers to think about the spirit world and life after death because it gives her hope that there is more out there than her “small, shitty life.”

As a mental health therapist, I often see adolescents use ghosts as coping mechanisms. These teens tend to only elaborate on paranormal beliefs when questioned during the assessment process about current or previous hallucinations. Their stories are unique, but they do have general themes. The ghost is often attributed to a deceased parent or grandparent who raised them and the general theme is that they will see them, smell them, or sense their presence when stressed or overwhelmed. Teenagers will also report ghosts or paranormal experiences to relate with a group or a select peer in

an effort to have a common experience, much like teens often do with musical artists.

Summary

There was a great deal of information discussed in this chapter. However, there is still much research regarding paranormal and ghostly experiences that was not covered here. The majority of this research states that there are some individuals who are prone to paranormal beliefs and consequent ghostly experiences. These individuals most likely are not cognitively aware of some of their possible personality issues (such as fantasy-proneness), paranormal coping strategies, or cognitive deficits. The human mind is a complex and complicated machine, and it is scary how little control we have over how this machine operates.

There are unconscious processes that are occurring every second that we will never know about. Although believers may find mainstream science's view on the paranormal to be disheartening, one must keep an open mind and admit that some paranormal reports and experiences can be attributed to mental illness, cognitive biases, sleep paralysis, and even fraud.

Be aware and understand that there are numerous natural (not supernatural) reasons for reports of ghostly encounters.

CONCLUSION

Ghostly encounters have been a source of fascination and wonder for most of my life. Although I wish that I would have learned much more about these transcendent experiences, what I have learned in talking with those lucky enough to truly experience them is "do not be afraid." This counsel may seem bizarre and counterintuitive for an otherworldly experience, but those who have embraced ghosts and ghostly encounters have an enhanced appreciation for their lives as their paranormal encounters seemed to be affirmative and emotionally elevating.

Research has showed that individuals who reported at least one paranormal experience believed that these experiences increased their interest in spiritual matters and improved their overall sense of well-being.[1] Along with indicating that their experiences resulted in increased happiness and confidence, they also reported a decreased dread of death, depression, loneliness, and fear.[2]

The common assumption is that paranormal experiences such as hauntings are a cause of distress. But it appears that this is a short-term reaction. TV programs focus on the sensational or negative effects of hauntings. However, imagine that you are at home and you encounter an apparition. For argument's sake, let's say that this experience is 100 percent authentic and even witnessed by another credible person. This experience would be, in my opinion, positively life-changing. Not only does it confirm to you that ghosts exist, but it also sheds light on consciousness and life after death.

Throughout *The Ghost Studies*, we have covered paranormal enthusiasts' theories on ghostly experiences, the role of EMFs in ghostly experiences, and my thoughts on the processes necessary for spontaneous ghostly experiences and residual hauntings.

As our journey is coming to an end, I would like to state unequivocally that paranormal phenomena do exist. It is weird that I have come to this conclusion, as my whole academic and professional life I have been told that ghosts, apparitions, ESP, telepathy, and other forms of psi are fantasy or symptoms of mental illness. I've witnessed those who believe being ridiculed and mocked for their experiences and beliefs. I've spoken with colleagues who would never admit or share their personal ghostly encounters for fear that by reporting these experiences they would be perceived as less reputable or intelligent. I would say to all those who are interested, fascinated, or at the very least open-minded about paranormal phenomena to take pride in the fact that you are researching its validity.

If you recall, what started me on my journey of exploration was an interaction when I was 14 with a friend who had a ghostly encounter. He asked me, "Do you believe in ghosts? Are ghosts real? What causes a ghost?"

When someone asks you if you believe in ghosts, if ghosts are real, or what causes a ghost, you can use the information we have discussed in the book to respond with intelligence and insight. Thank you for being my copilot on this journey of exploration into ghostly encounters. I am truly grateful for your time and hope that this book was both entertaining and eye-opening.

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